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The kind former and
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of his most gratefully
and sincerely attached
little friend
The Author's.

Eliza Le Hardy

12/6

Presentable city

AGABUS;

OR,

THE LAST OF THE DRUIDS:

AN

HISTORICAL POEM.

BY

ESTHER LE HARDY.

LONDON:

WILLIAM PICKERING

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TO THE RIGHT HON.

LORD VISCOUNT BERESFORD, P.C. D.C.L.

&c. &c. &c.

GOVERNOR OF THE ISLAND OF JERSEY,

THIS POEM

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY

HIS LORDSHIP'S

MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHORESS.

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TO THE RIGHT HON.

LORD VISCOUNT BERESFORD.

MY LORD,

THE deep interest you have always taken in my native island, and the anxiety you have ever shown to promote its welfare in every way, whilst it entitles you to what you so truly possess—the best feelings of every Jerseyman—makes me, as another instance of your support of our island talent, in the dedication of this small work to your Lordship, a personal recipient of your kindness. As such, will you accept, my Lord, of the grateful thanks of

Your Lordship's

Most obedient Servant,

ESTHER LE HARDY.



PREFACE.

ALTHOUGH the publication of this small poem is promoted by the support of one fondly dear to every English heart, and the proud boast of every English lip, still it is with feelings of the greatest diffidence that I offer this little work to the Public. Unknown in the literary world, I cannot enter its field but with those anxious fears that naturally even the most talented authors must feel on their first onset; but if I can succeed in impressing on the mind of youth the beauty of a good old age, or in leaving upon the page of some memory a lesson for a future thought, I shall not have written in vain. Poetry is the music of the mind: it rings gladly its harmonies on our childhood's ear, and in after life will often chime

some soothing moral on our worn-out spirit, and lull it into the forgetfulness of some sorrowing or anxious moment.

I have aimed at meriting the kindness of those few to whom I am known ; and to those who do not know me, I say “ I would please you likewise.”

“ Et si de l'agr  er je n'emporte le prix,
J'aurai du moins l'honneur de l'avoir entrepris.”

INTRODUCTION.

FOR a woman to pretend to treat learnedly on a subject so abstruse as that of the Druids, would be to prove a conceit whose sole parent must be ignorance, yet to choose for the subject of our pen one with which we are totally unacquainted, would be to ask from the well-known generosity of the British press for that leniency of criticism which it ever so willingly accords to the feebler mental powers of my sex ; but, at the same time, a generosity which we cease to merit, when we cease our exertions to deserve it.

To acknowledge myself capable of reconciling the diversity of opinions amongst classical and other writers on the subject of the Druids, would be to

assume a talent I in no way possess, and a learning which the more feminine pursuits of woman disqualify me from attaining. I have done my humble best to understand as much as necessary for the purpose of my work. I am writing *not as an historian, but simply as a poet*; I advance no new ideas as incontrovertible facts, and having chosen the best authorities my limited knowledge has made me acquainted with, leave to the classic and antiquary to settle the discrepancies of those writers which, as a mere poet, I trust I may be permitted equally to cite to garnish the fancies of my little work.

The history of the Druids is one of the most hidden pages of the past, for although the ancient classical writers differ about them on some points, almost all, under the name of Druids and other appellations, speak clearly of their learning, faith, and power; while succeeding writers have endeavoured to connect and keep together some of the dark links of the broken chain of their mysterious history; yet it is still a wilderness in which the lichen of fiction so covers the rock of truth, that the weak eye of an unlearned

woman can but gather from its parched leaf the stern nature of its soil, without obtaining any clearness as to what caused its formation, or decomposed its substance.

The real history of both the newly-discovered temple of Tubel, and its neighbouring Witch-rock in the ancient Island of Augia (Jersey), is now hidden behind the dark veil of the past, although they are still encircled with the thousand-and-one tales that bigotry may have invented for its interest, or ignorance pictured in its fear. All that is known of them is their existence: yet these stony monumental pages that meet the eye so constantly to tell us of a hidden faith, and unknown, strange, and busy scenes long past away, may nevertheless afford a subject for the contemplative mind to speculate and reflect upon, or for the lighter genius of poetry to wreath with the wild flowers of its fancy.

Agabus.

PART I.

“ Qui par de longs malheurs apprit à gouverner.”

HENRIADE.

RELIGION ! word, from pole to pole
The impulse of the yearning soul,
That springs to find, that longs to be
Communing with, its Deity ;
That makes the humble Pariah see
A God in some wild imagery ;
Makes the meek Brahmin bless his stream,
The Moslem of his houris dream,
The Persian raise his mystic rod
To his all beauteous roses' God :

Makes the old soiless Hebrew stand
The wonderment of every land,
And guides upon his narrow path
The Christian in his spotless faith.

Yet few there are who love to dwell
Within thy solitary cell ;
Or spring to claim thy holy power,
Until their summer sunset hour :
Few are who know how thou canst bless
The heart with unbreathed happiness ;
Few whose dull earthly eye can see
Thy power to set the captive free ;
Few know the charm thy blessings hold,
To turn the iron chain to gold ;
Or see thee raise the bough once broke
By some fierce lightning's burning stroke.
But thou art near in wood and vale,
And writest on each leaf thy tale—
Aye ! on the grass-blade of the sod
Thou tellest of thy living God !
And wave on wave upon that sea

Comes speaking of thy Deity.
From Time's primeval birth, thy life
Has been with sacred virtue rife.

Thought, waken up, with trumpet blast,
The sleeping ages of the past !
Dark hours, return, and let us tread
Our steps amongst the living dead !
Go, search the old oak grove, and there
The Druid kneels in silent prayer,
Making the starry hosts above
The messengers of heavenly love.

Augia ! (1)—yes, the warmest pulses start
As thy loved name comes chiming on the heart,
Cherish'd by beauty !—On thy emerald breast
The Druid found a genial spot of rest :
When all was lost, and glory's last blood shed,
This was the pillow for his dying head.
Thy wooded grove, thy little flow'ry vale,
Where young springs murmur forth some fond, fond
tale,

Of birds that come beside their silvery stream,
Their dreams of love in solitude to dream :
Or see where Echo sits within her cave,
Repeating the loved voice of her loved wave ;
Or mark the giant rock that dares the storm,
As ocean springs in ocean's wildest form,
Dashing the madden'd surges from its breast,
To crown with foam its giant conqueror's crest,
Turns and returns for ever in its might,
And glories in its field of frenzied fight.

Here the spurned Druid when an outcast fled,
And found a shelter for his dying head ;
Breathed in his sunset hour his sunny creed,
And turned in peace his starry faith to read
In its own heavenly page, where he could see
Those brighter worlds, wherein he was to be
A brighter being than earth's cold son of ill—
A brighter being, yet a Druid (2) still !
This the last spot that knew the Druid's name ;
Ours the last stones that told the Druid's fame ;
And let it be our little island's pride,

That on its shores (3) the last old Druids died.
Beneath them lies yet many a mouldering grave
Of altars buried, their loved shrines to save ;
And Time shall wrest yet from the ages' gloom
Many an altar, and long cherish'd tomb.

But let us turn, and with a mimic light
Tread through the groves and shades of Druid night ;
Behold the spot where those old trees
Bend to the ocean's angry breeze,
Which the stone priestess in her might,
Has from the holy rock (4) of light
Call'd wildly up from off the deep
Across the wooded grove to sweep.

'Tis night, and all calm nature sleeps,
Save the lone Druid, who now keeps
His midnight watch upon the fire
Of that rock's mystic fearful pyre ;
And in the Grove (5) another's eye
Is raised towards the speaking sky,
Watching some new star's coming birth,

Heralding some proud name to earth,
One who shall be his country's boast,
Some leader of a mighty host.
Or, haply, one small orb of light
Sparkles a moment on his sight,
Then shrinks behind that cloud's dark veil—
A momentary passing tale,
That tells, some infant with blest wing
Hastes on to Heaven's eternal spring.
Say, why did nature call it here,
To breathe one sigh, to shed one tear ?
Sweet innocent ! why wert thou given,
But to moan one small moan for Heaven ?

“ I came that when I left the earth
In my serene, blest angel birth,
A spirit's holy breath might fall
Upon the opening coronal
Of Spring's young flower-buds, and be
The messenger of purity,
To tell them to throw off their sadness,
And sprinkle earth with gems of gladness.”

At summer's eve young angels come,
Floating about their mortal home ;
In the soft silence of its night,
From heaven to earth they wing their flight ;
And take the flowers' mingled cup
Of pure and holy sweetness up
To Heaven—blest offering of worth,
The sole pure offering of earth.
They know the silent language known
By flowers, by sinless flowers alone !
With which they breathe a prayer all blest,
Mingled with incense of their breast—
Such prayer as man can never know,
A prayer unmix'd with sin or woe.
Oh ! yes, oft nature, hush'd in rest,
Waits those young angels of the blest,
Who come with thoughts from Heaven above,
To give to those their spirits love ;
And in these silent, short, blest hours,
Their path is o'er the sweets of flowers.

But, Rigel, watch thy charge this night ;
For how it burns with lurid light !

See how it feasts upon that brand !
Nay, turn not to that naked strand ;
Nought but the sea-crab wanders there,
Scared by the witch-fire's crimson glare.
Why turn again ? Why turn and start ?
Is it the instinct of the heart,
That springs it knows not, dreams not, why,
Unless it be—'tis destiny !
As trembling turns the needle still,
Even in unconsciousness of will ?

But something floats upon that sea,
Fixing his thought's intensity ;
It seems to shrink before the storm—
The vision bears a female form.
But who can, so devoid of power,
Seek this lone shore at this lone hour ?
Sure, 'tis some fancy of the brain !
But, no ! there ! there !—it floats again,
As if it linger'd for some grave
Of mercy in that sable wave.
Yet, see, that mariner's firm hand
Can well his fragile bark command :

Another effort, and they reach
The landing of La Roque's wild beach.
One word was all they seem'd to say ;
And springing through the dashing spray,
The boat and boatmen both are gone,
And there that wanderer stands alone.
Rigel, beware ! Aye, turn : beware !
Ahriman sends some tempter there :
Heed not that trembling one, or thou
May'st turn apostate to thy vow ;
Go, tend and watch that omen-fire,
Mark how its lingering flames expire ;
Thy record must be true and clear
For the Arch-Druid's secret ear.

But, see ! that shrinking form of fear
Now bends as if it bent in prayer ;
As if it deem'd this would not be
The truth of dread reality ;
Now stands as if some lightning's shock
Had made her portion of that rock.
Something now nears her through the gloom ;

'Tis a white spirit of the tomb !
She cannot fly : 'tis nearer ! near !
She stands immovable in fear.
Yet its step echoes on the beach ;
It speaks, how gentle is its speech !—
“ Young child of grief—for grief must be,
To bring thee o'er this dangerous sea,
Without apparent friend or home
To shelter thee when thou art come !
Nay, fear me not ! My gods shall be
Thy safeguard and security.—
By the great brazen (6) bull I swear,
Nought shall molest e'en one small hair
Of thy fair head : believe—aye, see,—
Man trembles more at one like thee.”
But e'en his words of truth and care
Seem'd to add torture to despair.
She look'd as though thought would not think ;
And shrinking as some worm might shrink,
Self seem'd from self to try and spring,
While yet she tried round self to cling ;
Clasping her heart, she tried to press

Its throb as she stood motionless ;
And seem'd to pray her weak hands' grasp,
To clasp herself with firmer clasp ;
As if her small, weak trembling arm
Was her sole fragile shield from harm.

At length with words whose choking breath
Seem'd like the broken voice of death,
And look that told, she felt the worst
Upon her fated head had burst,—
Therefore 'twere best at once to die,
Than linger in this agony,—
She turn'd, and, like a being of stone,
She spoke in calm and solemn tone :
“Thy gods! Oh! mine, to thee I bow ;
Protect me! Oh! protect me now!
Thy gods are foreign to my faith,
Yet I have braved the waves' wild path,
And to thy stranger island stray
From one who worships where I pray!
And I had hoped to form some cell,
Within some unknown little dell,

Far, Druid, from thy rites, and where
In loneliness, and quiet prayer
Whose orisons should never cease,
I might at length have tasted peace.
I know thy fearful rites, and see
What Heaven's holy will must be,—
A martyr for my faith to die,
And enter God's blest sanctuary ;
A martyr ! Saint ! Virgin, I bow,
And bless thee for the glory. Now,
Now ! take me to thy priests, thy grove,
And I will show them martyrs' love.
I am a Christian !”

Rigel shrank,
Before a name so oft had drank
His father's and forefathers' blood
With glutting joy ; and now he stood
Before a daughter of that Faith
So oft had strew'd the temple's path
With mangled limbs and choking sighs
Of Druids in death's agonies ;

And yet he turn'd an anxious eye ;
Say, was it fear or sympathy ?
“ Go, maiden, to that spot ; I dare
Not longer leave my sacred care ;
And some dark shadows of the pile
Have omen'd danger to this isle.
But, weak one,—No ! it cannot be
That danger lurks in one like thee !—
Go to that hut, say Rigel's name,
And that shall for thee shelter claim :
Go to those serfs ; they know no earth
Beyond the spot that gave them birth ;
Nor know the limits of their home :
Go, say thou art a wanderer come
From far, a child of grief and fear,
And ask their pity on thy tear.
Tell them the sorrows of thy breast,
And theirs they'll offer for its rest,
And will their humble kindness press,
Blessing their gods that they may bless.
But let thy stain'd creed hidden be,
Or blood might claim its blood from thee.
To send thee lone thus I am loth ;

But it were certain death to both,
If I, a priest of Druid faith,
Should guard a blood-stain'd Christian's path.
The Arch-Druid shall not know thee here.
I'll guard thee with a brother's care,
And find for thee thy hidden dell,
Where thou in holy peace shalt dwell,
And in thy worship shalt be free,
Protected by thy God and me."

Quicker the lightning does not fly
From that deep-veil'd and hidden sky,
Its power electric to impart,
Than love to strike the unguarded heart.
And Rigel had youth's lesson read,
Ere back to that wild rock he sped ;
But, Druid-priest ! this may not be
Committed to thy memory.
Go, mark thy mystic omen stone ;
But, no ! the rock charm now is gone !

Rocquebert, thou mount of demons' (i) home
And demon rites ; where shrinking come

The stoutest hearts, with steps that cower,
As through the midnight's lonely hour
They listen to thine orgies' glee
And horrid laughter, that the sea
Makes music to, as her wild wave
Howls o'er the drowning seamen's grave ;
While the stone priestess' granite form
Sits smiling coldly on the storm ;
Guarding, in charms with power replete,
The emblem'd victims at her feet ;
Throwing her shadow's sable pall
Upon that dead grey granite wall.
Silent and motionless, anew
She charms her mandates on her crew,
To spread or quench her fire of ill,
At Tubel's sacred temple's will.
For its Arch-Druid has the power
Even this vestal's pride to lower.
For to dread Agabus, whose name
Of virtue scares the fiends of flame,
The mighty gods such power gave,
That even *she* must be his slave.

Still now the peasant turns his eye
Tremblingly, as he passes by ;
And e'en in mid-day scarce can dare
Stand by those cloven feet of fear ;
And that indented wheel-track could
Have ne'er been form'd by power of good.
Aye, when beyond the dreaded mound,
He yet with fearful look turns round,
Ever expecting some strange sight
Will rise to prove the witch-rock's might,
And doubly hastens on his way
Upon the still-known orgies' day.

But who is he marks Rigel thus ?—
'Tis the Arch-Druid Agabus !
The one whom all look on with love,
The idol of old Tubel's grove ;
The fear'd, yet cherish'd one, who all
Fondly their prince and father call.
Old Agabus !—thy silver hair
To even childhood's heart is dear ;
And the proud vestals their pride dim,

To bend their gentlest looks on him ;
And woman, as she passes by,
Turns with a smile to meet his eye ;
Although his deeply-treasured store
Of mystic truths and Sabean lore,
And all thy bright gems, Poesy,
That come and dew his speaking eye,
Make the far-sounding tongue of fame
Proudly repeat his temple's name ;
For, when the robe of power he took,
No blood e'er stain'd (s) the golden hook.

Old age ! how beautiful thou art,
When Virtue makes a coronet
Of thy grey hair, wherein to set
Gems that the memories of the heart
Have saved that honoured crown to raise,
With good deeds done by thee, in long, long bygone
days.

Old age ! death's herald to us all.
How beautiful, how bright, e'en now,

When still thy virtues speak, and call
Man's eye to mark thy placid brow
Of truth. More glorious yet by far
To watch an old man die, and be what angels are.

Old age : love's home, not its wild dream,
Its calmest hour on life's rough road ;
All love to love thee ; for we seem
Drawn, by that love, nearer to God.
Old age ! how gladly all their task fulfil
To turn to thy grey hairs, and bless them still !

“ Son, thou didst watch the omen fire,
That burnt last night on Rocquebert's pyre ;
To me, it seem'd, with red'ning glare,
To omen danger hovering near :
But thou, whose duty 'twas to mark
The changes of its flickering spark,
Canst tell me how, and where, it flung
The last blaze of its crimson tongue ? ”
“ The charm'd fire's watch was mine last night,
And fearful was its lurid light ;

The sparks that bore the sulphur's hue
Towards the air-fiends wildly flew ;
The flame then bent its burning crest,
Then wreathed around the corpse's breast,
Then sprung again towards the shore,
And died.—Father, I know no more.”
“What! know no more? Thou dost not name
The deepest omen of the flame.
Why, thy all ever-faithful eye
Is guilty of strange treachery ;
I for a moment stood and gazed
Upon the furnace as it blazed ;
I mark'd the Christian's cross was still
Upon his breast. Thou didst my will,
And let the stiffen'd body lay
As the wave wash'd it in our bay ;
Didst thou not see the beacon's crest
Go sweep across the Christian's breast,
And then a veil of darkness spread
Upon the eyelids of the dead ?
Rigel, thy young eye must be taught
To rest where thou shouldst rest thy thought ;

And thoughts themselves will turn and rest
On what is dearest to their breast.

Nay, blush not ! I have known thy youth,
And know thee, son, the child of truth,
Who would no more thy watch forsake
Than I forget thy peace to make,
When aught has happened to inspire
The vestal Vega's holy ire.

And, doubtless, 'twas some astral ray
That turn'd thy watchful eye away,
And led thy curious thoughts to try
And read some strange new destiny.
Rigel, my son, 'twas thoughtless, wrong,
But I myself have once been young,
And know well how the mind can fly,
In that bright spring-tide's buoyancy ;
But too light yet is thy green thought
For truths sage Taliesin (9) taught :
And age informs me, man must turn
To dull experience, there to learn,
In its hard school of hope and fear,
And chequer'd page of joy and care,

That we must fold youth's soaring wing,
And merely tread the path assign'd ;
That here is no eternal spring,
Or setless sunshine of the mind ;
But youth, with soaring pinion spread,
Deems not its feather e'er can stop,
And flies towards its rainbow, made
In every beauteous hue of hope.
But rainbow colours pass away ;
The eagle's wing grows weary still ;
And thou thyself, my son, one day
Must bend thine to the Almighty's will.
Then let thy mind's eye turn, and seize
Those treasures where God bids it rest ;
For He, Creative Essence, sees
The secrets of each human breast."

What meant he ? does my secret dwell
Within his bosom ? It is well,
I will at once conceal my prize
Far from the old man's watchful eyes :
Or was it conscience that awoke,

When thus in warning voice he spoke—
“ I’ll guard her, aye ! I will ! I must !
Belus thyself shalt judge my trust.”

The stars are fading from the sky
Before their coming Deity,
And rested Nature wakes anew,
Her blooming labours to pursue.
The serfs are risen : first they pray,
And kneel before the dawning day,
Then kiss, in simple gratitude,
The earth, the giver of their food ;
Then, softly treading, gently go
To watch their sleeping child of woe.
But she is gone ! her leafy bed
But scarcely prest on, still is spread ;
And all, all powerless are they
To guess her steps, or track her way !
They search the wood, the vale, the coast,
But their strange guest is gone, is lost :
And to them had that wanderer come,
In Rigel’s name, to seek a home ;

And he was one ne'er fain to be
Deluded with impunity.
And what to them would Rigel say ?
Whose name they heard but to obey.
The iron (10) collar that they wore
The vassal badge of Rigel bore.
What think of Roaul and his care ?
Rigel, to them a name so dear,
For his young infant cradle nest
Had been that serf's own mother's breast,
And both, within the sacred grove,
Had drunk the fountain of her love,
For the dark hour gave Rigel breath,
Closed its fond giver's eye in death ;
E'en did not to her look accord
To see him kiss (11) his father's sword,
And the proud archive (12) chest was full
With many a valiant warrior's scull.
And Agabus, the loved ! the good !
Had called within the sacred wood
These serfs, to rear beneath his eye
That lonely boy's first infancy.

But sooner can the iceberg flow,
Or marble kindle into glow,
Than the cold heart of selfish steel,
So warmly beat, or warmly feel.

Agabus wanders through the wood,
Reading its leafy page of God,
His glorious works ! but his feet stay.
See what has stopped him on his way—
It is a beautiful fair sunny child,
With floating eye, blue, deep, and mild ;
Not more had nature placed it there
To aid its sight, than help its prayer ;
His wild but stiffly curling curl
Were a meet setting for a pearl ;
The trembling on his lip that play'd,
For love's own purest kiss was made ;
His sunny smile, and little sigh,
Were innocence's ecstasy ;
While his light buoyant laugh of mirth
Told his unconsciousness of earth.

“ Alfred, my child, what have you there,
You watch with look of so much care,
Of what is thy young mind so full ?
Sweet one, thy rose is beautiful ! ”

“ I want this idle butterfly,
Father, to spread its wings and fly,
That I may see it, and may run,
And chase its blue wing in the sun.”

“ Darling, ’tis dead, thy wish is vain.”

“ Then, father, make it live again,
Albert says all things thou canst do,
And brother always tells me true.”

The old man paused, and fondly smiled
Upon the little sunny child.

“ Oh, father, make it live, and stay
With our flowers every day,

And every morning I will come
And watch it on its rosy home."

If Heaven that beauteous eye should close,
'Twould rest upon some fadeless rose.

" Darling, I cannot make it live,
It is but God who life can give,
Or to retake it has the power,
From even that small fly or flower ;
Yet flowers to do his loved will try,
Though 'tis alone to bloom and die."

" But why do flowers live, since they
But only live to die away ?"

" Sweet child ! that thy young heart may know,
By seeing how the flowers grow
Without man's help, or even care,
That God is good, and every where.
To try and hide from Him is vain,
And when He wants us back again,

He tells our eye to shut, be dim,
And then, love, we go back to Him.
His are we even from our birth,
He only lends us to the earth ;
The earth is always here, but we
Go on to God's eternity ;
Where we are now we cannot stay,
When *He* calls we must all obey :
He made that butterfly there rest
And die within that rose's breast,
And one day, like that little fly,
Love, He will bid thee rest and die.
And if His message, innocent,
Be by some angel early sent,
As softly mayest thou repose
As thy loved blue fly on thy rose,
And be a cup pure, undefiled,
A rose-bud of thy God, my child."

The little darling innocent
Seem'd pondering what the old man meant,
Then breathed a little heavy sigh,
And answered, with a tearful eye,—

“No, father, no! Oh do not say
I’ll turn into a flower some day.
Oh do not turn me to a rose!
Not even such a rose as this;
For, though so beautiful it grows,
It does not seem to know a kiss,
Its colours never brighter glow,
Its leaf is still as ’twas before.
Father! I know not why, but know
I’m happier, I’m something more
Than a mere pretty rose like this is,
For when your lip is on my cheek,
I know it, though you may not speak,
Father, that love is meant by kisses.”

But, lo! another butterfly
Has caught again his sparkling eye;
Wildly he press’d the old man’s brow,
And flew to his new prize, and now
Off with his new-born hopes he ran—
Typing the life of older man.

Agobus.

PART II.

*“ Vous ne m'entendrez point amant faible et jaloux
En reproche honteux éclater contre vous.”*

ZAIRE.

OLD Druid grove ! old, old oak trees !
Where Love its own dream's shadow sees ;
Where it can, with its pencil free,
Picture its mind's bright imagery ;
Where it can wander, hope, and fear,
And smile away its own-form'd tear ;
Where it can let its full pulse swell,
With none to watch it, none to tell ;
Where grief can sigh its sigh, or where
The pure in heart can breathe their prayer ;

Spots to the world unseen, unknown,
Where the soul turns to stray alone.
Sweet (13) Tubel ! thy all-beauteous grove
May serve for prayer, grief, or love ;
Here Belus comes to shine, and gaze
Upon his shrine of sacred praise ;
For in that oak wood's verdant path
Is the loved altar of his faith,
Nestled within the fairest part
Of Tubel's venerated heart ;
And many a sacred nook is there,
Where priests unseen repeat their prayer,
Or watch at midnight-hour the sky,
To read the page of destiny ;
Or, lingering, pause, and rest awhile,
O'er some strange idle thought to smile ;
Some thought that tries its power to bind,
Uncall'd, around the unconscious mind.

The Vestal Vega, proud, lone one,
But only proud since she was lone,
(Pride ! shield of woman's anxious care,
Often the ægis of despair,

With which she hides her love, her gloom,
Her weakness, her heart's hidden tomb ;)
Vega, whom none can read, whose soul
Bends to no human being's control ;
Whose ardent soul, of quenchless flame,
No power can stay—no power can tame ;
Vega the ardent and the wild,
Ever to Agabus a child,
Now in forgetfulness of pride,
Kneels by her loved Arch-Druid's side ;
And on her brow there seems a glow
Of anger mingling with her woe ;
In all intensity 'tis there :
'Tis Vega, or 'twould picture fear.

“ Agabus, my sovereign priest,
Thou knowest, to the very least
Of thy sage laws I bend the knee ;
Aye, thy mere wish is law to me.
And when by mystic rules I try
Some holy charm or augury,
I ever mingle with the flame
Thy aged, loved, thy virtuous name ;

For then I know no power of ruth
Can dim the charm or augur's truth ;
But, Agabus, I one have tried,
And seen a serpent by thy side ;
And fearful omens followed on
This strange, this fearful, dreaded one ;
The gold (14) upon the temple's floor
Seem'd changed to blood-stain'd iron ore ;
The living (15) stone was wrapt in gloom,
Portentous of some coming doom ;
Again, at the dark midnight hour,
My incantation's holy power
Has raised one from the mighty dead,
Has told of danger o'er thy head,
And show'd our grove-trees wither'd, lone,
And pointed to the Peulven (16) stone,
Round which a snake had coil'd its length,
Then flew, and, with wing'd demon strength,
Into our Tubel's temple sprung,
With lightning flashing from its tongue,
And in its vengeful, crested head
Was Rigel's crouching eye of lead.
Thy heart forbids thine eye to see

E'en but the shade of treachery,
Loved sage ! But in thy wisdom's store
Of deep, all deep Sabean lore,
Read as thou wilt, thou canst not scan
That deeper page, the heart of man.
I have watch'd Rigel, watch'd him long,
His heart is guilty ; something wrong
Lurks in the chambers of his breast.
I saw him in the grove at rest,
But yester eve ; his knitted brow,
Although he slept, was bending low,
As if he listen'd to some dream
Of demon's voice, or demon's scream ;
Some passion nothing could control
Was struggling in his inmost soul ;
He breathed a name unknown to us,
Then smiled one smile, but, Agabus,
'Twas but a lightning one, no more ;
His brow grew darker than before ;
Then his clench'd hand, and swollen breath,
Seem'd meditating deeds of death ;
And, as he slept upon the road,

Swelling beside him watch'd a toad ;
Could I have crush'd them with my eye,
That hour had seen the reptiles die."

" Hush, Vega ! hush ! not this to me,
Who represent my deity.
Thy griefs have made thee wayward, wild ;
But be forgiven, deep-soul'd child :
Oppression 'tis has made thee wake,
And see in every path a snake.
And ever is thy heart in fear
For what, my child, to thee is dear ;
And whom thy love its light has made,
Would guard from e'en a shadow's shade :
Thy soul defies the power of time.
But groundless fear is next to crime ;
For 'tis to doubt the watchful eye
Of Him whose love is ever by."

" Rigel's dark heart stands not alone ;
The world has many another one.
Agabus, I have mark'd him near ;

Watch thee with ice-bound, iron glare :
Go if thou wilt, the rock's base move ;
But what can shake a woman's love ?
When urged by her deep pulses' start,
She guards the treasure of her heart ;
Who knows what links that love will own,
In beings, in things, in words unknown ?
Enough to know 'tis my will's choice
To guard thy weal—let that suffice."

"Vega, wild Vega!"

 " Yes, I'm wild ;
But, Agabus, I am thy child ;
Such I have lived, and such will die,
I deem it high-born destiny ;
Child of this temple and this grove,
The birth, the death place of my love."

"Then my own child, be calm, be still,
And listen to thy father's will ;
Hear what his lips of love would say,

And, Vega, as my child obey.
Learn to see nought but good below,
For our sun—God's glorious glow—
Shines to shed good on every hour ;
Let us then imitate His power,
And shed good, see good, deem all worth
That He has form'd upon this earth.
Suspicion is the dull damp cave
Where the weak forge their arms, to save
Themselves from some dread coming blow
They never are to see or know ;
Aye, more ! its dead light is the ray
That tempts the treacherous to betray.
My heart, from cold suspicion save it !
When danger comes, the brave can brave it ;
And Rigel's strange, unspeaking mood,
Vega, suits not thy warmer blood ;
But earth were dull, and still, and tame,
Were every flower that bloom'd the same ;
The sun's own ever-beauteous ray
Seems loveliest at the birth of day ;
And day would soon be tedious light

Did we ne'er see the shades of night ;
E'en joy itself would pall and cloy,
But for the tear's and sigh's alloy.

“ Vega, look round this grove so fair,
There's nought but prayer and praises here ;
Could that sublime wild scene around
Speak to its God in utter'd sound,
Deep as itself, its voice would be
One of such stern solemnity,
As every supplication low
And full was breathed in utterance slow ;
Or, when in hallelujahs raised,
Had been so glorious when it praised ;—
That man—whose consciousness of wrong
Must ever make his prayer, his song,
Moan through the ruins of his breast,
A faltering, trembling thing at best,—
Had shrunk before warm nature's sense,
Ashamed at his own utterance ;
Had vainly tried his plaint to pour,
And lost the power to adore ;

His heart abash'd had sunk unstrung,
And muteness ever seal'd his tongue.

“ Listen, my child, and when I am no more,
What I would tell thee now in memory store :
Ponder it well and often ; it may prove,
Vega, the last fond lesson of my love.
Long did I search for happiness ; but where,
Where was its home upon this earthly sphere ?
Did it, unseen, with silent Nature rest ?
Or was its dwelling in man's hidden breast ?
I asked the Sea, the glad unfetter'd sea !
Does Happiness, bright Ocean, dwell with thee ?
A broken mast upon a coming wave
Was all the answer its wild waters gave.
I ask'd the Earth,—the Earth's reply was brief ;
A wither'd bough dropp'd me its yellow leaf.
I ask'd the Sky,—the sky was pure and bright,—
Say does it dwell in thy pure realms of light ?
A dark cloud gathering hover'd o'er my head,
And its reply in one wild bolt was sped.
I ask'd the Living Creatures all ; but they

Answer'd, ' We each one are another's prey.'
I came to Man, and each loved passion tried,
And every passion thus in turn replied.
I ask'd Ambition,—Say dost thou possess
The mystic charm of spotless happiness?
Ambition's lofty eye of fire bent down
Heaved a deep sigh, and show'd her iron crown.
Pleasure, with thy bright crystal cup, dost thou
To man the boon of happiness bestow?
She answer'd not: o'er that cup's dregs she slept;
But e'en in sleep her trembling eyelids wept.
Fame, to thy trumpet's summons does it come?
Fame show'd a sparkle on a torrent's foam.
I ask'd the Miser; he made no reply,
But clutch'd his gold, and struggled not to die.
Glory—I look'd; she vainly tried to clear
Her spotted sword-blade of an orphan's tear.
Love, is its gem within thy sacred bower?
I turn'd, Love's tear bedew'd a fading flower.
Hope I next sought, a rainbow chain'd her eye,
It melted as she pointed to the sky.
Memory, in thy strange web say is it spun?

She raised an hour-glass—its bright sands were
run.

I saw Religion, as I call'd, start—tremble !

‘ Speak not thus loud,’ she said, ‘ thus men dissemble ;

And can the stream of happiness e’er flow

From cold dissimulation’s waters ?—No.’

My tones appear’d her holiness to crush,

She bent her head, and shrank within her blush.

Can happiness but a mere dream be ? can

No happiness be found on earth for man ?

Where, oh ! where seek that pure seal’d spring so
blest ?

An angel pass’d, he pointed to my breast ;

His words were few, and hallow’d with a tear ;

I turn’d, and sought it where he said,

And smiling raised my bow’d-down head.

I found it there.

‘ To daily do some good, to daily bless,

This is pure Nature’s creed, this, this is happiness !

Go, do thou likewise, imitate thy God,

And strew the crumbs of mercy on life’s road.’

“ Vega, my Vega, I’m an old man now ;
Time’s hand has seam’d these furrows on my brow,
That tell life’s plough has plough’d me deep, and
show

Their simple warning, that I soon must go
To our higher world, our changeless home ;
Life’s sunset is at hand—soon, soon ’twill come ;
But when to earth my eye looks down in blindness,
Think of the old man, Vega, think with kindness ;
For years and years, with pure and holy pride,
We served this sacred temple side by side ;
Vega, the time is nearing when I must
Give back to earth her only gift, her dust.
Thou art a woman. Manhood, youth, old age,
All turn to thee, upon their pilgrimage,
To bless them still. The warrior lays aside
His sword, and scabbards it with quiet pride ;
Science can close her book, nor deem it vain
For happiness, nor heed its page again ;
But woman, blesser of our destiny,
We cannot ever part from, turn from thee ;

The meek, the proud, the timid, and the brave,
Covet thy love, even beyond the grave.
Then, Vega, when I die, this hope fulfil,
Think, oh, think kindly of the old man still."

Belle Croute, gem of the Druid's isle,
Whose smile is infancy's soft smile ;
Sweet creek ! thy banks the fairies' home,
Thy tide but where the fay-boats come ;
Thy verdant trees, that bend to greet
The surge's homage at their feet ;
And thy ever-dancing wave,
The young wild flowers' sparkling grave,
Whose buds the breeze bears on the sea,
To write in Nature's poesy,
That ever-retold tale, how brief
Is th' existence of her leaf !
Well may thy little, hidden grove
Be home for holiness or love.
Within that pathless, tangled wood,
Whose young leaves kiss the rising flood,

A serf's low hut of peace and rest
Is built beneath the warbler's nest ;
To him the water from his well
Was sweeter than the hydromel (17) ;
For vengeance (18) never waken'd up
Its passion from that crystal cup.
The trophies (19) on his humble door,
The owlet's grey wing, and no more ;
His rough-form'd pipe (20) alone was heard
By his own home, or some wild bird ;
And he himself is one as wild
As Nature's own unfetter'd child ;
To him this little spot is dear,
For all he loves are centred here ;
And for them amulet and charm
Are his rough, fond, encircling arm ;
Even the Druid and his right
Were but strange visions to his sight.
Nought of their rites he understood,
Deeming his Nature's creed as good.
He heeds not what the sage reveals ;
He knows but this—he lives, he feels !

Cherishing his all-unknown grove,
For there in peace his heart may love.
In Nature's home his pulse is free
To live in plain simplicity.
He drinks the sunshine of the lone,
And heeds none, seeks none, but his own ;
Yet feels he is a being above
The timid creatures of his grove ;
Feels, from mere instinct, there must be
A something that must bend his knee ;
Bows to some star he thinks will keep
Its eye on his loved while they sleep ;
And in his brighter mid-day faith
Bends to that sun who strews his path
With flowers,—to his own god of day,—
And prays, because his heart must pray.

And here conceal'd she rests unseen,
That wanderer of La Roque's strange scene ;
For ere the dawn its light had shed,
Tremblingly from that spot she fled,
And here, exhausted, from the shore

The serf the senseless sufferer bore ;
And gently bid the trembler cease
Her tear within his home of peace ;
For, unknown to the world, none would
E'er pierce this hidden solitude ;
All that he cared to know was shown—
She was in sorrow, and alone.
Helpless, without one to defend,
A woman, and without a friend.

Her leaf bed seems of down to be ;
For pillow'd by security,
Fear now need not her watches keep,
To scare the tired lid from sleep.
That little spiry (21) roof to her
Is compass of the mariner ;
For its rush'd point in that wood's nest
Had led her to its home of rest.

But love—whose needle of the mind
Turns and returns again to find
The spot of its loved hidden goal,

That strange, strange loadstone of the soul,—
Has wander'd and re-wander'd far,
Until at last some guiding star
Leads it to that bright dell or grove
Where rests the magnet of its love.
And, Rigel, thou at last hast found
Thy breast's own consecrated ground,
That to the world unknown retreat,
That has in every heart its seat,
Where earthly love, oft wildly driven,
Kneels to what's earth, and deems it heaven,
And to its deity of clay
Repeats the serf's idolatry.

Oft Rigel's evening's task forgot,
He wanders to this cherish'd spot,
Or leaves some mystic rite half done,
To fly to his loved lonely one :
To read those timid looks have proved
His heart is shared, himself is loved ;
He feels now, let what clouds will lower,
A double self in love and power ;

For man without love's blessing spring
Is but a half-created thing.

“ Annette, see that bright sparkling beam,
Throwing its pale calm heavenly stream
Of holy light around us here,
As if it bent a listening ear,
And ask'd the perfumed dew to bring
Thy tale of grief upon its wing !
Loved !—did thy Rigel only know
Aught of that sacred tale of woe,
He'd tell that star—for blest were he
Could he call one bright beam on thee
Thy heart to soothe !—thy tears to stay ;
Like winter sunshine's gentle spell,
That comes to warm and melt away
The cold tear from the snowdrop's bell.”

“ To doubt the generous soul would bless,
Is but the crush'd heart's bitterness ;
Thou canst not do me weal. I must
Not take such from thee ; but will trust
Thy faithful ear, to hear my tale,

Though nought that candour can avail.
Vow'd by my mother to my God,
I grew in his all holy road.
The convent's soft bell long rung clear
Upon my childhood's listening ear ;
And young enthusiasm would fly,
In its unconscious piety,
To answer to that holy bell,
And its bright rosary re-tell.
Oh ! how my little heart has sprung
To join the anthem, as it flung
Its glorious hallelujahs high
Through clouds of incense to the sky.
E'en now I seem to feel that fear,
As my young hand with trembling care
Made the fresh flowers their leaves entwine
Upon the Virgin's holy shrine.
Oh ! how I loved my gifts to bring !
To me she was a living thing ;
For childhood cannot deem its prayer
Address'd to one who cannot hear.
Aye ! she did hear me : let it be
Again my childhood's ecstasy.

I see that image, and that fane,
It blest me, and it will again :
Oh ! how I loved to think that spot
Would ever be my changeless lot !
How breathlessly I lent my ear,
And in my child awe bent to hear
Of shrined St. Pothén, and the flood
Of holy martyrs' streams of blood !
Oh ! might I but a martyr rest
Beside those now all sacred blest,
Who dwell now in their heavenly home,
By the almighty prayers of Rome,
That led them o'er death's hidden road,
And canonized them with their God ;
Then could I, free from earth's dark taint,
Bless those who love me as their saint !
Would watch their prayers and holy flame,
And see them mingled with my name.

“ Though the veil bound not yet my brow,
Long had my heart breathed forth its vow ;
Upon that consecrated ground,

I seem'd to feel the utter'd sound
That from my lips would one day pour,
Was but an empty form, no more !—
A form the worldly ones must see,
To tempt them on to piety.

“ My dying father's batter'd shield
Saved Rollo on the battle-field,
Who vow'd a father he would prove
To me in truth and fondest love ;
And early 'trothed to his heir,
The generous, the brave Cloitaire ;
But, no ! I could not, dared not love him,
Although bright truth and honour prove him
One whom Love might exult to have
Subdued into his gentler slave.
Yes, all that's fond and good and kind,
Is link'd within his noble mind.

“ And, oh ! I would not do him wrong ;
He loves me ! he has loved me long :
But mine is like the tranquil flame

That shines upon a brother's name ;
For wedded to my God from youth,
I felt *He* own'd my plighted truth,
And felt a curse must brand my brow
If I had broke that marriage vow ;
And rather chose to hither fly,
And on the Druid's pile to die
A martyr to my God, than be
Apostate from my fealty.

“ But truly are my prayers made
Daily for Cloitaire in this shade.
Oh ! may his footsteps turn aside,
To seek some other, fitter bride ;
And here within this little dell,
This humble hut shall be my cell ;
And, Rigel, I shall often there
Offer a deep and earnest prayer,
That thou some day—”

“ Stop, Annette, stop !

Hope not ! 'tis useless ! do not hope

To turn me from my starry sky
To thy strange Virgin deity."

How little do we often know
 The depths of our inmost soul ;
Or dream a spirit there can grow
 We ne'er shall master or control !
How oft we smile in heedless care
 On some strange pulse we scarcely own,
But which one day shall form our prayer,
 While trembling lest that prayer be known !

But what wakes sooner love in youth
Than mutual words of holy truth ?
And she the trembler seen before,
Is the pale trembler now no more,
Unless, from some cause hidden, he
Should fail his tryst by that old tree.
Yet o'er her heart there rests a cloud ;
Oh ! may it not become its shroud !
Oh ! may he ! may he find the path
Even through her heart to her heart's faith !

For 'tis to love a dark day given,
When it dares not look up to heaven ;
And heart to heart may not be free
To speak of their eternity !
But every sunset's coming hour
Re-tells the tale of woman's power—
That tale of every passing day.
Rigel now glories to obey :
No charm that Agabus e'er knew
Bore spell more potent or more true ;
Shrinking, he feels his heart grow dim
If she but fold her eye from him.

Man, the all weak when woman pleads !
Man, who to save her gladly bleeds !
To serve her, knows not what is fear ;
Yet trembles at her trembling tear !
Man, the all-generous natured ! Man,
Say from thy deep heart's depths, who can
A better missionary prove
Than Woman, with the aid of love ?

“ Rigel ! dear Rigel ! ’Tis in vain !
We may not, must not meet again,
Unless,”—she paused,—“ if thou dost love—”

“ *If*, Annette ! ”

“ Well then, Rigel, prove,
Prove, my own Rigel, I am loved,
By listening to my words, unmoved
By anger ; but it could not be
Thy heart would kindle such for me !
Rigel ! commission’d from above,
I bring thee tidings of such love
As never yet was known to beat
Within the heart’s unseen retreat ;
I come to tell thee lore of things
Was brought to earth on angels’ wings ;
Of things all pure, beatified,
So holy and so sanctified,
That thou must leave thy starry sky,
And all its demon mystery ;

Thy incantations' power to harm,
Thy misletoe, and serpent's charm,
And all their fearful fiendish power,
To bless the day-dawn of this hour ;
I come to tell of one foretold
By prophets and by priests of old,
Who, though His day they could not see,
Died glorying that it was to be ;
And those who heard that infant's cry
Their blessings pour'd through tears on high.
That infant on earth's cold abode
Was who ?—The universal God,
Who came to suffer, bleed, and die,
To win us blest eternity !
Thy starry mysteries, what are they ?
The fearful guides that bid thee stray
From the but one, but narrow road,
That leads to heaven and to God ;
Thy baneful arts and magic fire,
Thy fearful all unhallow'd pyre,
Rigel, will burn at thy life's goal

Thine own imperishable soul.
Come then at once, for I am sent
To bid thee be God's penitent :
God's holy blood has been the price
To pay for thee the sacrifice ;
All man must bring is truth sincere,
With earnest thoughts, and earnest prayer,
A heart with its contrition broken,
Thy words of love breathed deep, not spoken,
With tears to wash away thy load,
Is all is asked thee of thy God—
To be, what He would have thee be,
The child of Christian liberty.
But, Druid, if my words thou spurnest,
And to thy fearful rites returnest ;
If thou wilt blindly give thine eye
To lifeless cold philosophy ;
If, obdurate, thou wilt not look
In Heaven's unseal'd prophetic book,—
Thy doom shall be that awful flame,
The all eternally the same,

Which shall, unquenching in thy breast,
Wake the dread worm that cannot rest,
Telling God's message scorn'd, neglected,
And the dread pang of God rejected;
And if thou wilt not be forgiven,
To take my curse, and that of Heaven.
But, Rigel! Rigel! all! all mine!
If thou wilt worship at his shrine."

Has Rigel drunk of Lethe's stream?
Or is this some wild waking dream?
He breathed no word.—One single flash,
That sprung like lightning through his lash,
Something to self appear'd to say,
And then he coldly turn'd away;
Yet back one look of firmness cast:
It told—he meant it for the last.

"Yet see, he turns, and on his brow
Appears no angry fearful vow.
Can his deep soul have yet forgiven
The wrath I call'd on him from heaven?"

But, oh, he's gone !—Death, cease thy strife !

For life is now no longer life.

But no, no, no ! oh ! let me be

E'en in this madd'ning agony.

Once yet, oh ! let me see him, hear him !

(Poor woman's heart !) and feel I'm near
him !

What fearful chain is round me thrown ?

Dread thought, canst thou define ?

Say, was that fearful word my own ?

Religion, no, 'twas thine.

No, no, this breast is not yet steel'd,

It could not thence have sprung ;

Its bitterness my lip had seal'd,

And paralyzed my tongue.

Yes, Faith, thy voice 'twas breathed the vow,

Not thou, my startled will ;

Oh, no, my heart, it was not thou ;

For thou art throbbing still."

The heart with usual coldness rife,

That seldom warms itself to life,

Can burn with deep volcanic power,
Or, roused, will like the tempest tower.
Such souls as these 'tis can create
From deepest love the deepest hate.

Rigel, beware, nay, turn not yet :
Go learn the lesson, to forget.
That lesson to the heart so stern,
So sad, so difficult to learn.
Go, calcine in thy burning blood,
The idol in thy thought that stood ;
Oh, better never rear a flower,
If it must die by lightning's power.
Best never taste the sweeten'd spell,
If we must drink the dregs as well.

“ Yes, I will see her once—but once,
And then for ever will renounce
Her love—will tear her from my heart,
And then for ever, ever part ;
But every pulse will chain, and hide,
And meet her with a Druid's pride ;

She shall not see my spirit bleed
As I return her too-loved creed ;
One, man dreams sent him from above,
That dangerous creed of woman's love :
Man's everlasting sacrifice,
The faith that lost him Paradise."

But will, fame, honour, what avail,
With woman's deep love in the scale ?
And Rigel, firm in faith and will,
Pauses, and turns, and trembles still.
" Woman ! yes, I her love forego !
No more will be her bondman—no !
'Tis cravenness thus, thus to cower ;
No more I own her tyrant power.
What ! bend my majesty of soul
To her uncertain, proud control ?
Better by far the slave to be
Of some wild wave on some wild sea ;
Best be the bird, whose idle wing
Is caught within the fowler's spring ;
Or fly, that slumbering on a flower

Has fallen into childhood's power ;
Or trust the sweets of dawning day
Will never melt and pass away.
And yet the heart's instinctive play
Looks round upon its weary way
For something more than self, to be
The light to guide its destiny ;
And woman's love for this was given—
Life's rainbow—arch'd from earth to heaven.
Yet how, how know a woman's will ?
But Annette, Annette loves me still.
Let others be or wild or strange,
My own poor Annette will not change.
But one must change ; say, how else part ?
And mine should be the sterner heart.
Her God I know not ; yet I read
She dreamt some blessing o'er my head.
But that dread curse ! her fatal stroke !—
Yet how she falter'd as she spoke !
'Twas energy of mind, not heart :
I saw her at her own words start.
That look of agony—that tear

That shone, yet dared not fall—her prayer,
In breathless stillness as I turn'd—
Her look of love to mine that spurn'd.—
Yes, I will see her but once more ;
Then fly this loved, this fatal shore.
I would not see her, but 'twould be
Disgrace to manhood's dignity
To leave a heart our love has broken,
Without one word of kindness spoken.
I will but tell her not to weep,
Will only press her hand once more :—
I feel a chilness o'er me creep ;
I wish this parting scene were o'er.
But I am firm, and can defy
E'en Annette's gentle, speaking eye.
Aye, since we part, she now shall see
A Druid's pride and dignity.

“ Christian, I come—take back thy heart ;
For ever, ever, now we part.
I scorn not thy strange unknown creed,
But, for my own, will suffer, bleed.

Thy hosts may come in sweeping floods—
Here's blood to give them for my gods.
But, scorning Christian, veil thy pride ;
For, know, thou standest by the side
Of one whose deep and glorious faith
First show'd thee, Gentile, Heaven's path ;
The eye of earth in wonder gazed ;
Th' astonished Rabbi stood amazed ;
And trembling princes sent afar
To know the meaning of thy star ;
And, while they sought for wisdom stored,
At once the Sabeans knelt, adored.
None others would their worship give,
But sent the sacred fugitive
An infant wanderer—the sole wise
Who read the language of the skies,
Came hastening upon their road,
And named Him Prophet, Prince, and God.
Their love had read, in Heaven's sky,
His bright, his glorious destiny ;
For no such star had ever been :
It shone as Magi ne'er had seen ;

Though many a planet had foreshown
Names rich in glory and renown ;
Yet ne'er such tidings had been sent
As lighted now the firmament ;
Writ on the Gentile's sacred page,
That he might read his heritage
Himself, and hear the holy call
That open'd Heaven's gate to all.
Canst thou be child of Him who came
A Martyr with a Godhead's name ?
In whose soft breast such deep love clung
For mortal man, that angels sung,
From heaven itself, to hail his birth—
Mercy's bright advent upon earth.
Are curses mercy ? Is their rod
The sceptre of this loving God ?
Are thy faith's sanction'd curses nursed
By Him whose fondness never cursed ?
The God who made the earth for all,
And hears the humblest insect's call ?
By thy own creed his blood was given
That none should be the lost of heaven.

To read man's heart is understood
But by its own Creator—God.
Shall man, the fallen, then decree
What the Almighty's will shall be ?
Go, child ! thou canst not curse or save
Beyond the precincts of the grave.
I only seek to know that He,
The all, all good, can hear, can see
My every thought, word, deed—his eye
Ne'er quits my path. My destiny
Is to tread earth my little day,
To humbly fear, to love, obey ;
And virtue's holy law fulfil.
Beyond the grave the Godhead will
His unknown path apportion man—
One his poor earth-mind could not span.
Weak child ! thou canst not curse the soul,
Or e'en one moment from the goal
Of death delay it.—Go ! I own
Omnipotence in God alone.

“ Back to my Tubel's grove I go,

Feeling that too much we may know.
Best ne'er have known the sun's bright light,
Than see it set in endless night.
Annette, I go, thy tempter-deed
May make my heart not turn but bleed ;
I cannot say—Oh never ! never !—
The word must part us both for ever ;
But to this dell no more I fly,
In all love's fond expectancy,
Of what ? Of some wild wandering hour,
When the heart basking in its power,
Seem'd half unconscious of its sense,
In its calm beauteous confidence.

“ I go, I must not pause, but fly.
Annette, I cannot say, ‘ good bye ! ’
But hear me swear, by that star's ray,
That never——”

“ Stay ! one moment stay
Here at thy feet, with heart deep riven,
Thy Annette kneels to be forgiven ;

Not for upholding her own God,
And tempting thee toward his road,
But that my heart for thee has borne
A flower has wither'd to a thorn :
Oh ! add not to the fearful cost,
Of feeling that thy love is lost ;
The feeling that within thy heart
I form its darkest, saddest part !
Loved ! these last words of love receive,
These trembling words, Forgive ! Forgive !”

“ Forgive thee ! aye, with springing will ;
Forgive thee, Annette ! bless thee still !
Wrong, confess'd fondly with love's tear,
Can almost make the error dear.
Here, keep this amulet, to charm
Away from thee the powers of harm ;
Keep it ! thy faith its powers deride,
But mine shall guard it by thy side :
My name be with it, dearest one.”

“ Can Rigel be for ever gone ?

Aye, words, wild words, we both have spoken,
Yet is not this love's precious token ?”

Oh ! there are moments, when the harass'd soul
Seems chain'd, with iron chain, to some dread goal
Of thought, where hopes on crutches stand,
Like death-mutes, with death-torches in their hand ;
And, with its heavy breath around us cast,
Lies coiled at our feet, the serpent Past.
Could we but crush it ! but the wish were vain,
Crush'd for a moment, 'twould re-live again,
With all its sad and bitter memories,
Chilling our thoughts, our holiest sympathies ;
Hissing, with its forked tongue, its bitterness
Upon that future, which we dream shall bless
Us still awhile, and where we plant fresh flowers,
To live upon their imaged sweets. But hours
Come with their spade and scythe to make their tombs,
And bury every blossom ere it blooms.
Yes, bury every hoped-for day of rest,
That yearn'd-for day in every human breast ;
That day that in the present never lives,

But haply still the future ever gives.
Go ask the heart that knows not of a sorrow,
Lives it in its to-day, or its to-morrow ?
Sorrow alone lives in the present ; Time
Will stand still for it ; whilst its chime
Of leaden tones, and dull thick echoes fall,
Like winter's wind flapping some funeral pall ;
She smiles, hastes on to meet some other smile,
But tears we drink, and taste each drop the while.

But who can say that he will spurn
The power of love, and never yearn
For its soft pulse, and tender ties,
And all its gentle sympathies ?

'Tis not by hours Love counts his time,
He counts it by his pulses' chime ;
What takes the sun long days to pass
Are moments in his hourglass,
Whose rainbow coloured grains of dust
Ever re-heap'd, yet ever must
Refall their crumbling power to prove,

While Hope, the sun-dial of love,
Whose gnomon points each coming hour
With shadow of some beauteous flower,
Comes, and re-comes, her shades to run,
Of rising and of setting sun,
With trembling beams that never rest
Stilly, within the human breast.

“ Wait not to-morrow at the tree,
Annette, I cannot be with thee,
For we must learn these coming nights
Some solemn new mysterious rites.
Couldst thou hear Agabus (22) rehearse
Our glorious Pæan’s holy verse,
With dew-drop standing in his eye,
And faltering voice of ecstasy,
E’en thou hadst paused to hear his word,
Aye, and in breathless list’ning heard,
How Aldebaran’s glorious light (23)
Leads on the chariot-wheels of night.
His words of love and wisdom seem
Like Belus’s all fiery beam,

Appears to warm and gently fall
Upon the young buds' coronal.

“ I go, love ! but 'tis not to change,
Or other flowers gather ;
Our hearts we will awhile exchange,
And both be yet together.

Oh no, love ! no, we do not part,
For memory, with love fraught,
Will from the echo of the heart
Give each to each his thought.
Then kiss for me this bit of heath,
And I will shrine it on my breast,
That absent from thee I may breathe
The truth that on its leaf will rest.

“ Go, Rigel, go, thou must not stay,
The evening star is on its way.”

'Tis now the moonlight hour of love,
Annette is wandering in her grove.

“ Where is he now ? my heart can see
That smile that tells he thinks of me :

How bright it looks on his lip beaming !
None know of whom his soul is dreaming.
Say, will he turn from some star's glow
To wonder where I wander now ?
Will he some occult charm not hear,
Because his thoughts are wand'ring here ?
And will his task more beauteous be
When he repeats its theme to me ?
Will he be glad to hear my praise,
 To see me bend a listening ear
To all his lip in ardour says,
 Because he knows to me 'tis dear ?
To hear the music of his voice,
 To see his mind, its beauteous whole ;
Or love me more when I rejoice
 At being the oasis of his soul ?
Oh, Rigel, haste thee back again,
 We will not speak of gods or faith,
To think of them, alas ! is vain,
 'Tis strewing briars on our path.
Oh ! cast not on the heart the dearth
Of loneliness, we are but earth—
Of earthly thoughts, of earthly clay,

That turns 'midst earthly flowers to stray :
Oh ! let us like earth's flowers be
From warring faiths a moment free,
And taste the paradisial sense
Of spotless love and innocence,
That forms no wish, that breathes no prayer,
That God and angels may not share."

Love's penance-hour at last has fled,
And Rigel back has quickly sped.

" I paused but once in hastening here
To breathe the wild flowers' rising prayer."

" Nay, speak not thus, my Rigel, say,
For what can sinless flowers pray ?"

" Loved one ! that heaven may renew
Their sunshine and their honey'd dew,
And that the wild bee may not crush,
With his rude wing, their opening blush.
The star prays—that no darken'd cloud
May come its sparkling beam to shroud,

Or stay its soft ray from being shed
Upon its sleeping flowers' bed.
The ocean prays—that in its breast
The swelling storm may chain'd up rest,
And that in peacefulness it may
There wave and re-wave tranquilly.
The earth prays—that the springs may give
Their streams to make its grass-blade live,
And that its breast may long be rife
With bounding throbs of joyous life.
All have on their allotted road
A something still to ask of God ;
To tell us He is Lord of all,
And prove our weakness through our call.
But what prays also can rejoice ;
And Nature's universal voice,
In earth and air, in sky and sea,
Rejoice in their loved Deity.

“ These are the truths that Agabus,
With look of love, oft teaches us ;
Letting us read in his calm eye

Nature's own quiet piety,
That springs its simple faith to prove
By love that seeks to waken love,
And goodness that, whate'er befall,
Turns to shed blessings upon all."

Agabus.

PART III.

*“ Now rattles through the tangled brake
Th’ alarum of the giant snake.”*

HON. A. HERBERT.

THE moon has twice her phases turn’d
Since Rocquebert’s light so strangely burn’d ;
And nought has come, through friend or stranger,
To whisper aught of fear or danger.
But who is he who dares this shade,
With Christian warrior’s glittering blade ?
“ Unknown one, stop ! Unknowing too,
Or thus thou would’st not dare pursue,
In garb of hostile mien, the road
Towards the shrine of Tubel’s god.”

“ I heed nor shrine nor power of ill,
I come a purpose to fulfil,
And my true sword my guarantee,
To guard my path secure and free ;
I come not here to fear or fly,
But my behest to do or die ! ”

“ Thou speakest as a warrior might
Upon the belted field of fight,
But in this grove subdue thy tone,
’Tis Belus’s all sacred one !
Nor dare before the high priest stand
With blood-stain’d weapon in thy hand. ”

“ I am a soldier, and I heed
Nor priesthood’s forms, nor Druids’ creed,
And ere my blade and I shall part,
Thou first must make this fearless heart
The scabbard where thine own proud glaive
Shall rest upon the Christian’s grave. ”

“ ’Tis bravely, boldly spoken ! and
My power this moment might command

My faithful serfs to hither hie,
And shatter it before thine eye.
But keep it, since thou stand'st alone ;
For, Christian, be it to thee known,
That power usurp'd upon the weak
Would leave shame's crimson on the cheek
Of, warrior, e'en the very least
Who calls himself a Druid priest !
Proceed, now, and thine errand say."

" I now am come from Alath (24) bay,
Where Rollo's war-boats wait, before
They come to bring him to this shore ;
Nor does he wish to war with thee,
Unless 'tis stern necessity.
I am his favour'd sister's son ;
But, Druid, I have come alone,
As every hostile thought shall cease,
If thou give what will give thee peace.
Truth, earnest truth, is all my aim,
Or call it, if thou wilt, love's name ;
I care not what name thought may lend,

If I obtain my cherish'd end.
I come to seek—nay, be not blind,—
I come to seek, and come to find,—
And from my purpose nought shall scare,—
A Christian maid who harbours here.
If aught has touch'd her sacred hair,
Thy doom is seal'd, thy doom is near.
My heart for her its tears has shed,
I've wept for her, but wept her dead ;
And gladly have bestowed my store
For masses on her soul to pour.
For on the morrow of her flight
To me her troth she was to plight,
And I to claim her at my side,
My loved ! my own ! my idol bride !
We miss'd her ! but word came of her,
Brought by an ancient mariner,
Who said he saw her on the shore,
Where often she had stray'd before ;
And that a sudden springing wave
Had borne her to the ocean's grave.
But proof I have she harbours here ;—

The death-bed proof, that proof sincere ;—
For he who here had with her sped,
Confess'd it on his dying bed.
I know the spot ; I know the night !
'Twas La Roque's bay, and Rocquebert's light.
'That hour,' he said, 'seem'd hell to mock,
In burning fury on its rock.'
Restore her, then, or Rollo's band
Ere three days on thy coast shall land."

"My answer would be firm and brief,
But that thou art the child of grief ;
And when that child appeals to me,
I ask not what his creed may be ;
As long as grief and he are one,
Of Agabus he is the son.
A Druid to a warrior youth
Swears not to seal his word of truth ;
For a high-priest's word can suffice
For e'en the truth of sacrifice.
But, listen to my earnest word,
Heard by my God !—I ne'er have heard

Of her of whom thou comest to speak :
But thou in liberty may'st seek
Wheree'er thou wilt for her thy love,
Except the temple of the grove ;
For none but priests may rest their eye
Within its awful sanctuary.
But first let Rigel come : the spell
He watch'd that night ; so he can tell
If aught approach'd our island shore :
But had aught, I had long before
Now known it ; for he need might fear,
Who keeps aught from the high-priest's ear.

“ Rigel, my son, this chief would claim,
Through threat of war, and blood and flame,
A Christian maiden he has lost ;
And who, he says, upon our coast,
Near to the rock of Glorious Light,
Landed, upon the very night
When thou wast watch-priest : didst thou
see
This wandering child of mystery ? ”

“ Dread Vega’s power !” a stern voice said,
“ Her darkest doom be on thy head,
If thou omit one spark of truth
Before this Christian warrior youth.”

O’er Rigel’s frame a shudder ran,
Which none but Vega’s eye could scan.

“ Nought on my watch-night landed near
To Rocquebert ; and the night so clear,
That nought could stem its neighbouring tide
My watchful eye had not descried ;
But nought that night came o’er the sea,
That ear could hear or eye could see.”

“ Rigel, thou every serf dost know,
And every hut ; then with him go,
And search each nook thou deem’st could hide
This faithful warrior’s missing bride.”

“ To-day is a dark day of gloom,
To weep (25) within the cromlech tomb,—

The holy spot of holy tears,
That holy memory endears.
The rites are all prepared to show
Its anniversary (26) of woe,
The weeping (27) women ready are,
And I it is who read the star (28) ;
But Roaul knows each spot as well,
And better e'en than I can tell ! ”

“ Then be it Roaul ! young serf, see
Thou showest this Christian courtesy ;
And lead him on, and while our guest,
In our name let nought molest
His path ; but let his will be free,
To search in freest liberty.
Let him in peace his path explore ;
Nor seek from (29) him for legend's store.
And, Christian, thou wilt to this grove
Return, to tell us of thy love. ”

What is that spirit comes and weighs
Its iron on the heart, and preys

Upon each waking wish and thought
With palsying power unseen, unsought ;
That strange cold gloom, that, undefined,
Stands sentinel upon the mind—
A spectre of nought eye can see,
Yet one of something is to be ;
A moaning phantom of the night,
Ghost of the ignis fatuus' light,
That lures on our aching eye,
And follows if we turn to fly ;
With eye of basilisk possess'd,
Deadening each pulse within our breast ;
Like hawk that stays its wing on high
O'er the poor victim of its eye,
With dead charm chains it to its nest,
Ere it swoop down upon its breast ?—
It is that strange foreboding, sent
We know not why—Presentiment !

Leaning beside a Dolmen now,
Vega, with stern yet tranquil brow,
Seem'd pondering something : her hand lay
On a last relic of man's clay.

“ Why have I found thee ? wherefore art thou here ?
Is it to tell my ready will,—‘ Prepare ? ’
Proud crumbling man ! thy soul a heavenly birth !
Yet this the legacy thou leavest to earth ;
As if thy power and folly to deride,
This relic now lies grinning at thy pride !
Aye ! and for ages on it still shall last
To tell Death’s frozen smile on all the past.
Man holds the hand of science, and can span
Nature’s deep works, and her hid treasures scan.
He struggles hard to leave the pen of fame
A something to record his simple name.
And what is nature’s tribute for his toil ?
Go ask the grave, its stores of wealth, its spoil !
‘ Grave, with what treasure is thy coffin full ? ’
The grave replies, ‘ But with a bone, a scull !’
Thou strange mis-shapen thing that hast confined
The noble essence of the human mind,
Why art thou fashion’d thus ? The power
That form’d thee, curious casket, form’d the flower
With colouring the loveliest we see ;
Say for what heavenly purpose ? But to be
The cup to hold the sweets that Nature gives

The humming fly that but a moment lives.
The power, that moulded thy eccentric form,
Fashion'd the mountain rock that braves the storm.
Say, has the flower, with hues the fairest graced,
Held aught so rare as in thy cup was placéd ?
Say, has the rock a gem more rich e'er known
Than thou hast cover'd with thy curious bone ?
With neither sense nor beauty art thou fraught,
Yet holdest the mysterious gem of thought.
Why art thou not a casket rich and pure,
Form'd of some beauteous gem, that shall endure
For ages, to bespeak thy mighty trust ?
Thou canst not answer, thing of crumbling dust !
Thou canst not ! senseless holder of all sense,
Thou knowest not the why, the when, the whence
Thou comest from and goest to ; thy day
Of life is ended now ; thou canst but say
To man,—' Proud man ! go ask the grave, the sod ;
And they will answer with me, Ask thy God.'

“ Agabus, go read the sky :
I've read my own strange augury ;

But I would, through thy wisdom's lore,
Yet try to learn a something more."

" Well, come beside the sacred tree,
And I will tell thee what I see.
Those stars of light are strangely tending,
And mark o'er Tubel something pending !
What can the fearful meaning be,
Clothed in such occult mystery ?
For, Vega, in that solemn sky,
This is what meets my shuddering eye :—

" The Serpent asks with lifted crest,—
Hast thou within thy anxious breast
E'er felt that living marble throb,
That in its swelling seems to rob
E'en life itself of life's own power,
And e'en makes self before self cower ?
Has thine eye bent upon the eye
Of blood-stain'd dying infamy ?
Hast thou e'er trembled at the page
Was written on the brow of age ?

Hast thou e'er seen the mortal strife
Of death-dark struggle—*life for life*?
Hast thou, alone, in shuddering, stood
And seen the murderer wash the blood
Beneath the quiet, tranquil sky,
Then start at his own leprosy?
Hast thou—the pall of that dark cloud
Stays my dim eye with its black shroud;
Would that I could its dull fold burst,
And know at once the fearful worst;
But Belus wills I know no more,
Or that black cloud had not come o'er.

“ Vega, I trust that young chief may
Discover at some future day
His strangely lost young bride: 'tis sure
She cannot be upon this shore:—
Aye! come upon the very night
When Rigel watch'd the omen light;
Come to the very spot where he
Was watching for each thing could be

Another sign, that yet might pour
Upon the omen something more :—
He must have known it. But I deem
’Twas but that wild delirious dream,
That often comes its fear to shed
Upon some dark one’s dying bed ;
But faith that young chief had not given,
That dimm’d his hope, though stars of heaven
Had spoken it : his heart but yearn’d
To that one beam that had return’d
With flowers from Love’s wither’d plain,
To live a living hope again ! ”

The soldier and his humble guide
Just turn’d towards the water’s side ;
A boat was rocking near the strand,
Merely by two strong boatmen mann’d,
And Cloitaire bid the sailors lay
Their anchor down ; and the third day,
At eve, he back again would come,
And then they should re-steer for home.

The fourth day is now come, and where
Can Cloitaire be ? he comes not near ;
They wonder ; nay, this must not be !
One to the grove is gone, to see
Why nought of him had yet been heard ;
For never Cloitaire failed his word
To serf or sovereign, friend or foe,
In hour of weal, in hour of woe.

Another day ! they will not wait ;
But to the very temple's gate,
On Vega's ear itself, they pour'd
The tale about their missing lord.

“ One day more be your stay delay'd,
While keen and anxious search is made.”

But the last had been heard of him
Was that, towards the first day's din,
Within the grove he stray'd alone.
Going towards the Peulvin stone ;

And all his guide had got to tell,
Was, that he lost him in the dell,
As in some tangled path they stray'd
In the thick copse of grove's wild glade.

“ Some dreadful deed has late been done
Beside our sacred bound'ry stone ;
The Peulvin here in Tubel's wood
Is stain'd with fearful clots of blood ;
The grass around is trampled o'er,
And blacken'd with the stains of gore ;
And this bright lock once waved upon
The brow of that brave trusting one !
Ay, Agabus ! but this dark night
Shall bring the murderer to light.”

“ Oh, Vega ! this dread awful hour
Seems paralysing e'en thought's power :
But I will drag, through Dis's (30) might,
The wretch's blood-stain'd hand to sight.
'Tis not one blood alone is shed ;
Rollo, by justful vengeance led,

Will in my children's gore requite
That shed upon that dreadful night.
Call here the priests.

“This island shore
Has just now seen, what ne'er before
Had stain'd its soil or dimm'd its eye,
A deed of blackest treachery!
Let the wing'd (?) herald hear my will,
Across each dale, each wood, and hill,
To Rocquebert go, the call-flame rise
High as it can towards the skies,
And let each trembling serf appear
This evening round the temple here;
And in the flame, the shade immerse
Will show a fearful bitter curse—
Shall ever hang, shall ever stay,
On him who dares to disobey.”

And as he spoke, the old man's eye
Flash'd with a god-star's energy.
Wildly the fire ascending flew,

With fearful tinge of sulphur's hue.
As that flame banner is display'd
The wild serfs see and mark the shade,
A moment pause, with shrinking heart ;
Then springing through each vale they start,
Regardless of each hill or brake,
Straight for the temple's wood they make ;
With streaming (32) red hair, through the grove,
They like strange driven spirits move,
Hastening, lest Vega should rehearse
On them the lagging (33) crane's dread curse.
With eager word, and anxious eye,
To press the startling signal try ;
Wondering why they are summon'd thus
In wrath by their loved Agabus ;
And now like some wild flock they stand,
Waiting with awe some dread command.

The solemn rite they may not see,—
That—that is sacred mystery.
The breeze tells of the incense shed—
The unknown offering's blood has bled ;

And from the temple's heart see rise
The tameless flame of sacrifice ;
While a stern chorus bursts the air,
That palsies every heart with fear.
The sacred banner (34) hung unfurl'd,
With emblem of the mundane world ;
While the bright silver serpents flew
Across its field of azure hue,
And seem'd with living life to glow
Beneath their crown of mistletoe.
Its fold moved not, as though 'twould be
Still 'midst this awful mystery.
And now the minor priests stand round
The holy consecrated ground ;
While the serfs near and nearer press,
To see their priest and prophetess.
Agabus stands in robes (35) of white,
That flow as if in streams of light ;
Begirted by a golden (36) band,
While golden bracelets deck'd each hand ;
In golden chain upon his breast,
The mystic egg (37) was seen to rest ;

And from another chain of gold,
The golden (38) keys his office told ;
While the gold sacred (39) sickle graced
The royal band that girt his waist ;
For his robe is the regal one,
Worn by the high-priest of the sun.
A wreath of mistletoe and oak
Upon his brow his order spoke.
Typing the power of his god
Upon his earth's obedient sod,
His long proud sceptre touch'd the ground.

The vervain (40) Vega's forehead bound ;
And the bright (41) crescent on her brow
In amber (42) charm appear'd to glow.
Her vestal veil its pure folds threw
Round her dark dress of crimson hue.

And now she stands to prophesy,
And breathe the curse ; and with an eye
As flaming as the flaming brand
She holds uplifted in her hand ;

She speaks, and every word falls clear
And far upon the solemn air,
That seems, in darkness deep and still,
Itself to listen to her will.

“ Within five days a deed of blood
Has stain'd this sacred grove of God.
Forward each aged father stand,
Who numbers children in this land ;
For ye it is who first shall be
The mark to mark your progeny,
To show the poison'd vulture's nest,
That nursed the wretch's iron breast.
That race a wither'd lip shall mark,
Shall glow like blue flame in the dark ;
But my last dooming blasting call
Alone shall on the guilty fall ;
And ere this night wake from its gloom,
He meets his awful measured doom.
And now my firebrand will I spread,
To wake the spirit of the dead ;
And mark me, I can see that stone,

And, culprit ! also thee, though none
Seem to be near ; yet by this rite,
My eye on that spot rests to-night.”
(Breathless as death the pale serfs stood.)

“ Go to the ordeal stone of blood,
And let him not or pause or stay
The time of one star’s twinkling ray
From out the path which he must tread,
Or dread shall be made doubly dread.

And, guilty hand, do thou remain
Transfix’d, as with an iron chain,
Upon that death spot, while I pour
This incantation on its gore :—

‘ Fiends shall their watches round it keep ;
Till, springing from his deadly sleep,
From earth the accusing spirit rise,
With awful brand of sacrifice,
To write in characters of flame,
Upon that spot the murderer’s name.

“ ‘ Turn’d to a rock his form shall be
Upon some lonely fearful sea ;

Where, senseless to the universe,
He'll still be sentient of my curse.
And he shall on the midnight air,
Hear his loved shrieking in despair,
And fiends shall show on some wild wave,
Those dear ones whom he cannot save ;—
Shall see them fancy that they see
Him near them in their agony ;
Shall stretch their arms, and call his name
In words of fondness still the same ;
Then see them sink beneath the wave,
Feeling he could, but would not save.
And demons shall the storm-winds stir,
To howl upon the murderer.
Darkness shall wrap his living tomb,
Except when lightnings break its gloom ;
And, to his heart with clammy cling
Of everlasting withering,
Shall make him ever shrinking dread
Some pending evil on his head,
For ever coming, never come !'—
This ! this shall be the murderer's doom !

“ Serfs, every priest shall first be sent,
To show the seathless innocent ;
For nought shall come in form of ruth,
To scare or harm the heart of truth.

“ Rigel ! go thou ;—thou need’st not fear,
The good are Belus’s own care ;—
And haste thee back, that these may see
Innocence is security.”

But Rigel comes not back again !
They wait awhile ; but wait in vain.
Priests to the Peulvin quickly press :
But Agabus he first must bless
Their steps ; for now upon the gloom
Speed the dark spirits of the tomb.

The Arch-Druid raised his hands on high,
And bless’d them as they pass’d him by.

“ My children, take with you the charm,
To shield and guard your steps from harm.

Demons ! my chain I round you throw :
My children now in safety go."

Pale they return ; for they have found
Rigel stretch'd dying on the ground.
Conscience had done its victor deed :
He said but, " I 'twas made him bleed.
I feel the stiffening curse of stone ;
Oh demons ! fiends ! begone ! begone ! "

Nature—example to weak man ;
And meant so in the Godhead's plan
Of universe, that it might stand
A ready page beneath his hand,
To teach him both in age and youth,
The beauty of God's love, His truth ;—
But love and truth are but the same
Blest pulse, but with a different name.
See Nature wait the storm to meet ;
Her senseless sense of self, replete
With a calm majesty and power,
That seems to feel, yet scorns the hour ;—

Waiting in quietness the worst
On her unshrinking head to burst.
Motionless the old oak tree
Stands in its forest dignity ;
That the fork'd lightning may rend,
That trunk its power could not bend,
Or throws, like some bold ocean rock,
Back on the storm the storm's wild shock :
So the deep spirit, calm and still,
Stands waiting its impending ill.

“ Soon, Vega, in his fearful ire,
The Christian here, with brand and fire,
And blood stain'd sword, will expiate
This fearful deed of demon hate.
Aye, he will come with war and flame,
Like that o'erwhelming one, who came
On horse (13) whose hoof upon the strand
Left the impression of that hand,
That augurs told bespoke the glaive
Should make the trembling world his slave ;
Will he e'en leave us when we're riven ?

Number the battle-worn (44) eleven :
Who on their hazel crutches, pale
And blood-stain'd, brought the fearful tale
Here where they came unseen to die,
And left their faith as legacy.
Faithfully have we to it stood,
And now may seal it with our blood."

" O Agabus ! oh ! must we see
This awful day of agony !
The temples of home's happy hearth
Be broken fragments on the earth.
This temple, our beloved ! our own !
Its stones be scatter'd, overthrown,
And blood of ours about it run
Through slave who ne'er adored the sun,
Or deem'd the glorious stars could be
The prophets of futurity.
Oh ! would this vestal blood could flow,
To stay this fearful day of woe !
Oh ! would that on the sacred (45) isle
I lay upon the funeral pile,

Feeling that joy which vestals feel
When dying for their country's weal.
Ceridwin, (46) turn, oh ! turn to stone
This poor heart of thy vestal one ! ”

“ Let the pale serf now tell with fear
The history of his future tear.
Vega, 'tis not for us to weep,
Deep moments need have thoughts as deep ;
My voice no more can (47) quench the fire
Of human passion's maddening ire.
Vega, we now must act, not fear ;
Give me thy counsel, (48) not thy tear.
Lean on me, Vega, I am old,
But woman's danger makes man bold
Even in age. Oh ! weep not thus,
Thou art beside old Agabus.”

When man feels woman helpless, weak,
Has but his heart for shield to seek ;
If in her sorrow, or her pride,
She but cling firmly to his side,

It gives him will, and strength, and power,
To face the worst, the darkest hour.
Aye ! he will give his dying breath
To guard her to the gates of death.
His noble soul, on eagle's wings,
Comes bending to her sufferings;
Seeks out her griefs, and makes his breast
A sacred refuge for their rest.
Proud to be made their sharer, he
Will risk for her eternity;
And every joy and hope forego.
Can woman help him too much ?—No.
Her lot to watch him with the eye
Of fondest, holiest purity ;
To light his path of earthly gloom,
And love him, aye ! beyond the tomb.
Best gift at her primeval birth,
Her God's vicegerent upon earth.

“ Stay thou beside me, for 'twill give
Me power a moment yet to live ;
And life I need one other hour
To save this shrine from Rollo's power.

“ Hu Gadarn, (49) founder of our race,
Be with us on this cherish'd place,
That our spirits may be three, (50)
And our power tenfold be.

“ The temple shall not—shall not fall !
Would this old heart could be the wall
To save it from the Christian slave !
But no ! it shall not fall ! a grave (51)
Shall round its worshipp'd altars rise,
And save it from the sacrifice ;
And every stone shall stand unmoved,
Treasured by those its altars loved :
Quick ! let again the call-flame burn,
And let the scatter'd serfs return.
Vega, of tear-choak'd words enough,
Our gods call now ‘*Au guí l'an neuf.*’ (52)
Echo its call from steep to steep,
And let each heart now work, not weep.”

Now every hand, and every heart,
In the all-holy work take part ;
And many a hasty tear is shed

Upon the ashes of the dead,
Whose urns are brought, with tearful eye,
To rest within the sanctuary ;
Each strives the other to outvie
In this last work of piety ;
All spring with energy, to save
Their temple in this holy grave ;
E'en the old oak now gives its bough,
It may not shade its temple now,
But glories in its dying lot
That helps to guard the sacred spot,
In which its leaf, so often blest,
The altar and the priest had drest.
'Tis done (53)—and few there are could tell
The spot where many a victim fell,
And many a holy rite was done
To their still worshipp'd glorious sun.

“ But those dark sails upon the sea
Tell Rollo coming. Children flee !
Nor mark this spot, begone ! begone !
And leave this sacred tomb alone.”

But Agabus and Vega, they—
They cannot, will not, turn away ;
But calmly stand with tranquil eye
Upon this cherish'd grave to die.

The wild yell rises from the strand,
There gleam the Christian blade and brand.
On ! on they come, thirsting once more
To drink the helpless Druid gore ;
The dells are echoing scream to scream,
The rivulet is one red stream ;
The war spear's bell, (54) the war dog's cry, (55)
Mix with the shrieks of agony ;
The sacred friends (56) lie side by side,
Together they have fought and died ;
Time for no message now is lent,
The air with dying groans is rent ;
The hut's flame-torch is wildly spread ;
The dying die upon the dead ;
In the expiring infant's grasp
Is still the grass it tried to clasp ;
Its mother, flung upon that heath,

Has died, unconscious of her death ;
And far and wild, through hill and dale,
Is the same terror-shrieking tale.
Their thirst for blood its taste has waked,
And now it knows not to be slaked ;
In their God's name, they fill the air
With cries of carnage and despair,
Now they come rushing like a flood,
Their very hair is stain'd with blood,
Clutch'd in the last convulsive sigh
Of some poor serf's last agony.

Waiting the annihilating band,
An old man and a woman stand ;
Not in some nook of hidden ground,
But on a torn wood's hilly mound,
Which the poor timid serf has left,
With earth fresh turn'd and wood fresh cleft ;
Their white robes and their quiet eye
Tell of their mind's high majesty.
They bend not, sue not, speak no word !
They are not of the common herd.

None but the captain of the band
Dare make them captives of his hand—
So strangely round the lesser mind
Does look of power its power bind,
E'en he protects with courteous care.
“ Rollo himself will soon be here,
And, till he comes to do his vow,
Fear nought, for I protect you now.”

“Fear! soul-stain'd Christian, know, know this,
An Arch-Druid knows not what it is ;
He fears nor death, nor tortured blood—
He fears but one thing only—God.”

Rollo comes ! slaves, your glorious hour,
To show the captives in your power.
He sternly takes his seat of fate,
And his obedient warriors wait
For him to bid the weapon glow,
Shall lay the waiting captives low.
Vainly did Rollo's stern look try
To bend that old man's glowing eye.

“ Christian, the blood-stain’d, and the cold,
Thou canst not chill this blood ; ’tis old,
’Tis old in age ; but, warrior, know
’Tis firm in faith, and young in glow !
The fire within this mind burns free,
Thou canst not quench its energy.
I dread not what thou callest death,
That last iota of the breath ;
That equal offering at life’s term,
Of sensient man, and senseless worm ;
Raised from the earth, my soul will spring,
As on an eagle’s glorious wing,
And soar with an unshrinking eye
To worship still my Deity,
In purer form, in brighter sphere,
Than the stain’d earth we tread on here.
Thy vengeance I no longer heed,
But, Christian, for my children plead :
In mercy cease to stain this shore
With timid serfs’ and Druids’ gore ;
Our shrines, our groves are gone from us,
Take now the heart of Agabus.

Arch-Druid's blood is blood divine,
Mingle no water with your wine ;
Let its rich cup your thirst suffice,
And crown your awful sacrifice.
Here—(since thy sovereign regal dress
To suit thy taste may not be less,
Or rather suit thy Christian mood,
Than the deep shade of human blood,)
Here still some crimson dye remains
Within these feeble aged veins,
Can dye a robe of state, shall be
Unchanging to eternity.
Take it ; and these lost children save.
This ! this is all I bend to crave.”

Rollo's dark brow is thick with gloom—

“ Druid, prepare to meet thy doom ;
I heed not what it yet shall be,
But soon shall utter the decree.
The sacrifice may perhaps be made
With Rollo's own all-glorious blade.

“ Vestal, thy life is spared, and thou
Art free and fetterless e’en now.
Woman I war not with. But wait
And see thy last Arch-Druid’s fate ;
And from our mercy thou may’st crave
His loathsome body. It will save
Our dogs a banquet, where the least
Would be polluted by the feast.”

But Vega ! her dark folded lash
Has hid her eye’s wild glowing flash ;
And, death-like, every nerve comprest,
Conceals the swelling of her breast.
Like tigress waiting for her prey,
Her eye one moment does not stray :
And now, with tiger fury springs,
And ere thought breathed, his weapon wrings
From Rollo’s hand, and in his breast
Has plunged it to its very rest.

So light’ning-like the deed had been,
That few its fatal power had seen,

And e'en awhile those startled few
Asked, gazing, could this truth be true?

And calmly Vega waits the call
Of vengeance to as calmly fall ;
One look of dead cold scorn she gave,
Then bent it on her temple's grave,
That through its veins pour'd down the blood
On the hid altar of her God.
One tear of glory dimm'd her eye !
As proudly it was raised on high,
Then seem'd as if by some chain bound
She now was portion of that mound.

“ Oh ! may my blood upon this grave,
Old Agabus, thy loved blood save.” (57)

Nought did the high priest's look express,
Stunn'd into still unconsciousness.
Vengeance now yells its fearful cries,
A hundred blows—and Vega dies.
She seem'd exultingly to bleed,

And to die glorying in her deed.
The last words from her heart's full spring
Were "Agabus! my priest! my king!"
Her last look, as her eye grew dim,
Was turn'd with fondest beam on him.
But the last sigh her deep breath drew,
Breathed something no one ever knew.

"Old Druid! some strange unknown power
Has stood near thee this fatal hour,
And guards thee now. Thy race is gone,
The fearful worst for all is done.
Enough of blood has now been spilt;
Old Druid, go! go where thou wilt;
Thou may'st to Carnac's (58) ruins fly,
Or on thy children's grave may'st die."

Where did he go? None ever knew
Where his last mortal sigh he drew;
Yet often would his eye of love
Come to his Tubel's cherish'd grove;
Would see its altar's flame rise high,

To bear his mandates to the sky,
Where, shining in his glorious way,
Moved his still worshipp'd god of day.
He lived, as still the lone heart lives,
'Midst the loved ruins memory gives ;
His heart indifferent to all,
Yearn'd for the hour of heaven-call ;
His eye, not on the present cast,
Sought memory in her wither'd past—
Would hear his Vega's wild words still,
And mark again her bending will—
Would see her last dread fearful spring,
To save her loved priest and her king ;
Then shrink before the purple flood
Of her warm heart's devoted blood.
But as the tear his eye would dim,
Would he have called her back to him ?
No ; for he knew that earth but gave
Her wild lone heart a wither'd grave,
And that it now, on its bright shore,
In agony could throb no more.
Then memory would seek her rest

In the wild music of her breast,
Re-echoing in love's fond strain,

“ Vega, my wild !

My sad ! sad ! child !

We'll meet, Oh ! yes ! we'll fondly meet again ! ”

But youth's loved arm supports his age,
And guides his weary pilgrimage :
Young Alfred leads his footsteps on,
The old man is not all alone.

When breathed his last sigh for his grove,
The little child he once had blest,
Held him in fondness to his breast,
And scann'd his dying eye with love.

Oft his young heart would turn and tell
Old Agabus's last farewell,
Repeating, with triumphant eye,
The old man's dying prophecy—
That told the tale of days of yore,
And how that Britain's soil once more

Should be the spot, the earthly scene
Of glory such as ne'er had been.
And this the tale, the last farewell,
The boy so loved again to tell.

“ Agabus, whose rising soul
Appear'd above the world's control,
This history of my country told,
And bid me keep the tale as gold :—

“ ‘ Alfred, remember this ; thine eye
Must read it oft in memory :
Let it be shrined with Heaven's laws,
And brace thy nerves to Freedom's cause.
Our forefathers—the proud, the free,
The noble sons of bravery,
Who knew but to contend, defy !
To be victorious or to die !—
Now sleep unconscious in their graves :
Their children bend as Roman slaves ;
Aye ! bear the iron chain and yoke
Of those who fled when Brennus spoke.

Answering to Vengeance's deep call ;
Naked as the intrepid Gaul,
Divested of each thing could be
A trophy for her enemy ;
Her hearth stones burnt, her harvests trod ;
Spurning proud Rome's detested rod ;—
Our country on Dariorig's (59) plain
Rallied for freedom ; but in vain
Did bravest bravery do all
That manly daring could, her fall
The gods had doom'd that hour should come,
And Gaulish Britain fell to Rome,—
Compell'd for centuries to cower
Beneath her changing iron power.

“ ‘ But, oh ! the future opens now ;
I feel it with the sanguine glow
Of prophecy ; yes, there I see
The vista of Futurity
Open before me : help my sight,
Ye gods ! to bear this beaming light.

“ ‘ Rome ! Rome shall fall, ’tis Heaven’s high will ;
Although the time be distant—still
That time shall come, when it shall pour
Its wrath upon her grasping power.
Sprung from the she-wolf’s milk, her breast
Has ever been the she-wolf’s nest ;
And Rome, while Rome a power sustains,
Will show the she-wolf in her veins.—
But not, not yet her final doom.—
Yet must earth be the slave of Rome,
Still iron-yoked, and chain’d the same,
But slavery with a holier name ;
While she herself, with up-raised rod,
Mocks the meek mercy of her God ;
Glories again to steep her hand
In human gore ; or lights the brand
Of discord, treachery, shrinking fear,
Of agony and wild despair ;
Then gives her fearful power of ruth
The names of Mercy and of Truth ;
Making e’en monarch’s necks to be

Her footstools of humility.
But Britain's glorious soil shall be
The land shall seal her destiny.
Scorn'd now in even her own lair,
And hunted from it by despair,
Her tyrannies have taught to turn,
And taught even herself to spurn,
She comes, and still in her last hour
Gnashes her broken teeth for power.
I see the time, though distant far ;
It comes when Britain's glorious star
In her meridian shall be seen
More glorious than she yet has been.
Aye ! then shall come one struggle more,
For Rome to grasp Britannia's shore.
On steps of avarice she twines
Her iron chain around its shrines ;
And all its free-born sons would bring
Crouching to kiss her sandal's string ;
Seeking by darkness to control
The spirit of Britannia's soul ;
Striving to bind with chain of steel,

Britannia to her chariot-wheel ;
Would make her sons in slavery bow,
Like her own slaves she crushes now.
This her last effort, her last blow,—
Rome's glory is departed now.'

“ He paused—tears gushing from his eye ;
Then with redoubled energy
Continued—

“ ‘ Centuries shall pass,
And each the other shall surpass
In glory. Then a woman's smile
Shall shed its light on Britain's isle,
And proudly to the world shall prove
The sovereignty of woman's love.
Well may the sceptre grace her hand,
Her woman's soul ; for her loved land
Would soak its soil with one deep flood
Of her heart's gentle, faithful blood,
Ere aught should dare to dim the name
Of her loved country's spotless fame ;

Or even breathe a breath should lower
Its honour or its rightful power,
Firmly to all its weal she clings ! —
(Most blest of all its line of kings !)
Aye, the mere wild flower of its sod,
To her is love's gift of her God.

“ ‘ Let the whole world assembled come
And see her in her island home ;
Where all its sons, the very least,
Proudly enthrones her in his breast,
With feelings that awake the whole
Enthusiasm of manhood's soul.

“ ‘ But while each round her blessing sheds,
And almost worships where she treads,
Her faith ! her fondness ! honour !—prove
Her regal title to that love.’

“ ‘ Triumphant beam'd the old man's eye :
He bless'd her of his prophecy ;

Bless'd her with beauty, wealth, and power ;
 Bless'd her with virtue's richest dower ;
 Bless'd her with one, who turns to bless
 In deep affection's faithfulness ;
 Bless'd those fair beings to earth has bound her,
 Springing in ecstacy around her ;
 Bless'd those she loved, and bless'd the day
 When Britain own'd **Victoria's** sway.

“ This was his last expiring breath ;
 So clear, I could not deem it death.
 So brightly closed the Arch-Druid's eye
 In glory, scarce he seem'd to die ;
 He merely seem'd to change, and be
 Heaven's bless'd herald of futurity ! ”

NOTES TO AGABUS.

NOTES.

1. *Augia.*—p. 3.

AUGIA, according to fable, was the name of Jersey at the time of the Druids : it afterwards bore that of Cæsaria. This, with the other Channel islands, was comprised in the ancient dominions of the Celts, whose priests were those Druids so celebrated for their wisdom and mysterious rites.

2. *A brighter being than earth's cold son of ill—
A brighter being, yet a Druid still!*—p. 4.

The Druids believed that the soul after death was transmigrated into a higher sphere. They believed that both spirit and matter were eternal ; that the world, unchangeable in its substance, varied constantly in its form, under the influence of two agencies—fire and water ; the soul in quitting the body, passed into a superior or inferior sphere according as it had deserved rewards or punishments. “ There are for the soul,” observes The Triads, “ three circles of existence : first, the circle of infinity and immateriality, where the Deity

alone could live or dwell ; secondly, the circle of a necessary state (of origin or trial), inhabited by the being who draws his existence from matter ; and man goes through this circle ; thirdly, the circle of felicity, inhabited by the being who draws his existence from what is animate ; and man penetrates through this to heaven." And further on—"Three causes make man return to the circle of trial : first, negligence in instructing himself ; secondly, his little love of good ; thirdly, his adherence to evil. The man who had lived well, resumed in the circle of felicity his passions and his habits ; the warrior refound his weapons and his horse ; the huntsman his dogs and his javelins ; and the priest his faithful followers. News was sent of the living to the dead upon the pyre's flame : letters were thrown upon the bodies either for themselves or other deceased. Money could be lent on earth payable in a future state ; and necessarily such wonderful and wild conceptions became the sources of the most awful, the most sublime, and the most fearful sacrifices."—Translation of "*Histoire de la Bretagne, par Pitre Chevalier, dédié au Comte de Chateaubriand.*"

3. *And let it be our little island's pride,
That on its shores the last old Druids died.*—p. 4, 5.

"Proscrits et dépouillés, les prêtres gaulois se réfugièrent au milieu des forêts, et dans les îlots dont sont parsemées les côtes des deux Breagnes."—*Histoire des Peuples Bretons*, par Aurelien de Coursin.

"Nous pouvons assurer, en général, que toutes les petites isles situées dans l'Océan Britannique, tant celles qui avoisinoient l'Angleterre, que celles qui étoient le long des côtes des Gauls, étoient ou desertes entièrement, ou habitées seule-

ment par des Druides ou Druidesses.”—Religion des Gaulois, Dom Martin, tom. ii. lib. iii. chap. xiv.

“Le culte proserit continua d’être prêché avec ferveur, notamment, par l’Arch-Druide Merlin, dans le 5^{me} siècle et long temps après lui ; jusqu’au 7^{me} siècle le culte des Druides continua d’exister concurremment avec le polythéisme et avec le culte Chrétien.

* * * * *

“L’île de la Bretagne acquit une haute célébrité pour tout ce qui concernait la magie ; cette île ainsi que les petites îles de l’archipele Armoricaïn en étaient le théâtre, et mirent la réputation des Druides au dessus même de celles des Mages et des Perses.”—Histoire des Gaulois, Amédée Thierry.

“Un fait n’est point à douter c’est que long temps après l’établissement du Christianisme dans les Gauls, une partie de l’île de la Bretagne, et de la péninsule Armoricaïne, était encore plongée dans l’idolâtrie.

“Dans la partie de la Grande Bretagne occupée par les anciens possesseurs du pays, le Christianisme ne parvint que très tard à détruire les pratiques de l’ancienne religion national. (Grégoire, lib. 14.) L’élément druidique ne disparut même pas complètement après la victoire de la nouvelle foi. L’église pour ne point froisser ces âmes énergiques et tenaces, respecta des usages anciens, tout ce qui n’était pas en opposition au dogmes établis par le Christ ; et laissa subsister une certaine racine antique qui était bonne, les évêques de la Gaule, les Druides Chrétiens.”—Histoire des Peuples Bretons, par A. Coursin, p. 49.

That it was a long time before Christianity was established in Augia, is evident. The earliest church there—that of St. Brelades—bearing the late date of the twelfth century.

4. *Has from the holy rock of light.*—p. 5.

The rock of Rocquebert. Rocque, "Rock," old French ; "Bert, beophit, Saxon, bright, famous."—Bailey's Dictionary.

5. *And in the Grove another's eye.*—p. 5.

The way in which the Chaldeans, or Chasdenas, from the very beginning observed the horoscope of any nativity, was this :—A Chaldean sat at night-time in his lofty observatory contemplating the stars ; another sat by the woman until such time as she was delivered, when he signified that event to him who was astronomically engaged, which as soon as he had heard, he observed the sign then rising for the horoscope ; but in the day he attended to the ascendants and the sun's motion.—J. Landseer's "Sabeen Researches."

6. *By the great brazen bull I swear.*—p. 10.

The bull was held sacred by the Gauls.—Borlase's "Antiquities."

"Plutarque fournit encore une preuve evidente du culte des Gaulois pour le taureau, (il dit sur un article de traité,) qu'ils jurèrent d'observer les articles du traité sur leur taureau d'airain."—Histoire des Gaulois, Dom Martin, tom. ii.

7. *Rocquebert, thou mount of demons' home.*—p. 14.

This, the celebrated Witch-rock of the island, has obtained a high position in superstition's eye, which nature's fanciful arrangement has given birth to. Quite on the summit the rock assumes the appearance of an old hag in a sitting position ; in another point of view is the outline of a colossal

figure of a man with his back fastened to the stone : other dreaded signs are the indented marks of cloven feet, and a mysterious channel, or, as it is locally termed, wheel-rut. These singular freaks of some antediluvian convulsions have given rise amongst the ignorant to traditions without number ; and even in this enlightened day the old idea of witches holding their orgies there on a Friday night is still believed by many of the peasantry.

8. *For, when the robe of power he took,
No blood e'er stain'd the golden hook.*—p. 17.

“The Druids have a superintendent to whom they are subject, upon whose decease the most worthy succeeds ; but if there happen to be several candidates, the election is decided by a majority of votes, and sometimes by the sword.”—Cæsar Com. Gal., book vi. 8.

9. *For truths the sage Taliesin taught.*—p. 20.

Hanes Taliesin. In former times there was in Pennlyn, “The End of the Lake,” a man of noble descent, his name Tegid Voel, “Bald Serenity,” and his paternal estate was in the middle of the lake Tegid or Pemblemere.

His espoused wife was named Ceridwin ; by this wife he had a son, Mororan ap Tegid, “Raven of the Sea, the Son of Serenity,” and a daughter called Creinyw or Creirwy, “The Token of the Egg”—the sacred token of life :—she was the most beautiful damsel in the world.

But these children had a brother named Avagddu, “Utter Darkness,” or “Black Accumulations.” Ceridwin, the mother of this deformed son, concluded in her mind that he would have but little chance of being admitted into respectable com-

pany unless he were endowed with some honourable accomplishments or sciences.

Then she determined, agreeably to the mystery of the books of Pheryllt, to prepare for her son a cauldron of Awen a Gwybodeu, "Water of Inspiration and Sciences," that he might more readily be admitted into honourable society upon account of his knowledge and his skill in regard to futurity. The cauldron began to boil, and it was requisite that the boiling should be continued without interruption for the period of a year and a day, and till three blessed drops of the endowment could be obtained.

She had Gwion, "the Little," the son of Gwriang, the herald of Llanvair, the fane of the lady, in *Caer Einiawn*, "the City of the Just," in *Powys*, "the Land of Rest," to superintend the preparation of the cauldron; and she had appointed a blind man named Morda, "Ruler of the Sea," to kindle the fire under the cauldron, with a strict injunction that he should not suffer the boiling to be interrupted before the completion of the year and the day.

In the mean time Ceridwin, with due attention to the books of astronomy, and to the hours of the planets, employed herself daily in botanizing and in collecting plants of every species which possessed rare virtues.

On a certain day about the completion of the year, while she was thus botanizing and muttering to herself, three drops of the efficacious water happened to fly out of the cauldron and alight upon the finger of Gwion the Little. The heat of the water occasioned his putting his finger in his mouth. As soon as these precious drops had touched his lips, every event of futurity was opened to his view, and he clearly perceived that his greatest concern was to be aware of the stratagems of

Ceridwin, whose knowledge was very great : with extreme terror he fled towards his native country.

As for the cauldron, it divided into two halves, for the whole of the water it contained, excepting the three efficacious drops, was poisonous, so that it poisoned the horses of Gwyddno Garanhir, which drank of the channel into which the cauldron emptied itself. Hence that channel was afterwards called "The Channel of Gwyddno's Horses."

Ceridwin entering in just at this moment, and perceiving her whole year's labour was entirely lost, seized an oar and struck the blind Morda on the head, so that one of his eyes dropped down on his cheek.

"Thou hast disfigured me wrongfully," exclaimed Morda, "seeing I am innocent ; thy loss has not been occasioned by any fault of mine."

"True," replied Ceridwin, "it was Gwion the Little who robbed me." Having pronounced these words, she began to run in pursuit of him.

Gwion perceiving her at a distance, transformed himself into a hare, and doubled his speed ; but Ceridwin instantly becoming a greyhound, turned him, and chased him down the river.

Leaping into the stream, he assumed the form of a fish, but his resentful enemy, who was now become an otter, traced him down the stream, so that he was obliged to take the form of a bird, and fly into the air.

That element afforded him no refuge, for the lady, in the form of a sparrow-hawk, was gaining on him.

Shuddering with the dread of death, he perceived a heap of clean wheat upon a floor, dropped into the midst of it, and assumed the form of a single grain.

Ceridwin took the form of a black high-crested hen, de-

scended upon the wheat, scratched him out, distinguished and swallowed him. She was pregnant of him nine months, and when delivered of him, she found him so lovely a babe that she had not resolution to put him to death.

She placed him however in a coracle, covered with a skin, and, by the instigation of her husband, cast him into the sea on the 29th of April.

In those times Gwyddno's wear stood out in the beach between Dyvi and Aberystwith, near his own castle, and in that wear it was usual to take fish to the value of a hundred pounds upon the 1st of May. Gwyddno had an only son named Elphin, who had been a most unfortunate and necessitous young man. This was a great affliction to his father, who began to think that he had been born in an evil hour.

His counsellors however persuaded the father to let his son have the drawing of the wear on that year, by way of experiment, in order to prove whether any good fortune would ever attend him, and that he might have something to begin the world.

The next day, being May-eve, Elphin examined the wear, and found nothing ; but, as he was going away, he perceived the coracle, covered with the skin, resting upon the pole of the dam.

Then one of the wear-men said to him, "Thou hast never been completely unfortunate before this night ; for now thou hast destroyed the virtue of the wear, in which the value of a hundred pounds was always taken upon the eve of May-day."

"How so?" replied Elphin, "that coracle may possibly contain the value of a hundred pounds."

The skin was opened, and the opener perceiving the forehead of the infant, said to Elphin, "Taliesin, radiant front." "Radiant front be his name," said the prince, who now lifted

the infant in his arms, commiserating his own misfortunes, and placed him behind him on his horse, as it had been in the most easy chair.

Immediately after this the babe composed for Elphin a song of consolation and praise, at the same time he prophesied his future renown. The consolation was the first hymn that Taliesin sung in order to comfort Elphin, who was grieved for his disappointment in the draught of the wear, and still more so as he thought that the world would impute the fault and misfortune entirely to himself.

Elphin carries the new-born babe to the castle, and presents him to his father, who demands whether he was a human being or a spirit, and is answered in a mystical song, in which he professes himself a *general primary* bard, who had existence in all ages, and identifies his own character with that of the sun.

Gwyddno, astonished at his proficiency, demands another song, and is answered as follows :—

“Ar y dwr,” &c.

“Water has the power of conferring a blessing.

It is meet to think rightly of God.

It is meet to pray earnestly to God ;

because the benefits that proceed from Him cannot be impeded.

“Thrice have I been born ; I know how to meditate ; it is woful that men will not come to seek all the sciences of the world which are treasured in my bosom, for I know all that has been, and all that will be hereafter,” &c.

The Gaulish tradition of Taliesin is almost precisely the same as the Welsh.

10. *The iron collar that he wore*
 The rascal badge of Rigel bore.—p. 23.

“Par une nuit d’été qu’éclairait une lune brillante, un homme —Non !—Un esclave gaulois, car il avait la tête rasée, portait au cou un collier de fer poli.”—Sue.

11. *To see him kiss his father’s sword.*—p. 23.

“Every Gaul was a soldier. Each mother made her newborn infant son kiss the naked blade of his father’s sword. This was the baptism of infants.”—Translation of *Histoire de la Bretagne*, par Pitre Chevalier.

12. *And the proud archive chest was full*
 With many a valiant warrior’s scull.—p. 23.

“The heads of their enemies, which were the chiefest persons of quality, they carefully deposit in chests, embalming them with oil of cedar, and showing them to strangers. They glory and boast that some of their ancestors, their fathers, or themselves, though great sums have been offered for them, yet have refused to accept them ; some glory so much on this account, that they refuse to take for one of these heads its weight in gold.”—Diodorus of Sicily, b. v. c. 2. et Strabo, lib. iv.

13. *Sweet Tubel !*—p. 30.

From the remains on Mount Tubel having been found so near Rocquebert, the Peulvin stone being about midway between the two, the distance of not a quarter of a mile, it is not improbable that in the age of Druidism those natural peculiarities of the rock, from which even now superstition extracts

her fears, may have been in some way linked with a faith whose stony pages were sought for in every thing marvellous in nature that could support its power.

From the peculiar position of Mont Tubel immediately opposite, and within sight of the Mount of St. Michael, the Tumbeline of Armorica, the author of this little work considers that the appellation of Mont Tubel is the record of ancient tradition ; for although the deed extant that mentions it in a conveyance of land writes Mont Hube, yet at the period when those deeds were written, education was at so low an ebb in the island, that, in all probability, the word would be written according to the mere caprice or ear of the scrivener. There are other reasons, too long for comment, which give sufficient support for the poetic licence taken against our old island orthography.

The remains uncovered, and which are at present totally unknown to the scientific world, are allowed by the one or two learned men who have seen them to be, from their unique arrangement, some of the most curious and as yet the most incomprehensible ever found. They were discovered in the year 1847, by James Bolt, a market gardener, who deeming the stones he saw above the surface were the head of a quarry, proceeded to open the ground for that purpose, when it was found they bore a regularly arranged form, and on further investigation, the present curious remain of antiquity was discovered. The land belongs to Charles Ramier, Esq., who, with a spirit worthy of his taste, intends protecting to our island a relic such as England cannot show, and that tells of old Augia's by-gone days of learning and of glory.

14. *The gold upon the temple's floor.*—p. 32.

The custom observed by the higher Gauls in the temple of

their gods is admirably remarkable ; for in their oratories and sacred temples of this country, in honour of their gods, they scatter pieces of gold up and down, which none of the inhabitants, their superstitious devotion is such, will in the least touch or meddle with, though the Gauls are of themselves extremely covetous.”—Diodorus, b. v. c. 2. ; Caesar 6.

15. *The living stone was wrapt in gloom.*—p. 32.

“ In Genesis (chap. xxviii.), Jacob erects a stone, which action gave rise to the custom of erecting pillars, called by the Greeks Baitulia, which may be supposed to derive its origin from Bethel. The heathen Baitulia were supposed to be animated by the god to whom they were consecrated. Sancho-niathon says that Ouranus invented them, having made stones that possessed life. The rocking-stones of the Druids may have been designed to perpetuate the same superstition.”—Archæologia, vol. xxv. page 204.

Mr. Borlase, in speaking of the Logan stones, says, “ It is not improbable that the Druids, so well versed in the arts of magic, observing the uncommon property of the natural Logan stone, soon learned to make use of it as a miracle ; and where they had no natural ones, made artificial ones and consecrated them. They then imagined spirits to inhabit them ; and this motion it is likely they insisted on as a proof of these spirits residing in them.”—Borlase’s Antiquities, p. 192.

16. *And pointed to the Peulvin stone.*—p. 32.

“ Menhir (long stone), or Peulvin (upright stone), guarded the approach of the temples.”—Histoire de la Bretagne, Chevalier.

17. *To him the water from his well
Was sweeter than the hydromel.*—p. 43.

“ Les Gaulois composaient divers sortes de boissons fermentées ; telles que la bière d’orge, appelée Cervisa, la bière de froment mêlée de miel, appelée l’hydromel.”—Histoire des Gaulois, Thierry, and Diodorus, &c.

18. *For vengeance neverer waken’d up
Its passions from that crystal cup.*—p. 43.

“ Les Gaulois après des repas copieux, dit Posidonius, aiment à prendre les armes et à se provoquer mutuellement à des duels simulés.”—Histoire des Gaulois, Thierry.

19. *The trophies on his humble door,
The owl’s grey wing, and no more.*—p. 43.

“ They fasten those that they have killed in battle over the door of their houses, as if they were so many wild beasts taken in hunting.”—Diodorus.

20. *His rough formed pipe.*—p. 43.

“ Le pâtre tranquillement assis sur les débris d’une porte déceumane, pressait sous son bras une antre gonflée de vent, il animait aussi une espèce de flûte double, dont les sons avait une douceur selon son goût.”—Les Martyrs.

21. *That little spiry roof to her.*—p. 45.

“ The houses of the Gauls were circular, with high pointed roofs.”—Tacitus.

22. *Couldst thou hear Agabus rehearse
Our glorious Pœan's sacred verse.*—p. 70.

The mode of instruction of the Druids was purely oral, according to Caesar. The disciples continued sometimes twenty years under instruction, during which time they committed to memory the poetic verses of their faith.

23. *How Aldebaran's glorious light.*—p. 70.

"The large and bright star in the head of Taurus was by the Arabians called Al Debaran,—that is, foremost or leading star,—because at the commencement of their year. When it rose heliacally, it led off the heavenly host."—J. Landseer's "Sabeian Researches."

24. *Alath.*—p. 79.

The ancient name of the town of St. Malo.

25. *To weep within the cromlech tomb.*—p. 83.

"That the cromlech or cromlech was in its original destination a sepulchral monument, will appear beyond a doubt."—Borlase's Antiquities.

26. *The rites are all prepared to show
The anniversary of woe.*—p. 84.

The custom of periodical lamentation for the dead is mentioned in Holy Writ: "And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel."—2 Chron. xxxv. 25.

“Osiris of Egypt was supposed to be dead or absent forty days each year, during which the people lamented his loss as the Syrians do Adonis.”—J. Landseer’s “Sabœan Researches.”

27. *The weeping women ready are.*—p. 84.

The custom of calling persons to mourn has Biblical authority: “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider ye, and call for the mourning women, that they may come” (Jer. ix. 17). “And they shall call the husbandman to mourning, and such as are skilful of lamentation to wailing” (Amos v. 9).

28. *And I it is who read the star.*—p. 84.

That the Druids borrowed their religion from the East, we know. On a subject so hidden under the veil of oblivion as the minutiae of the Druidic rites, the imagination, particularly that of a mere unlettered woman, may be allowed to form its speculation on the but faint authority that a broken and disjointed history only leaves us; and as no authority within the authoress’ limited knowledge controverts the idea, she takes the poetic license of supposing those covered monuments such as Kitseott House, Langon, and others of a similar nature, to be lachrymosial tombs, made to receive and protect from the accidents of weather one or more of those weeping women whose business it was to honour the dead by yearly lamentations, and who might at the annual setting of the titular star of the deceased, commemorate his death by those wailings recorded both in sacred and profane history. And as in all nations, in all circumstances of death the priesthood have ever held a conspicuous position, it is not to be supposed they would have allowed themselves to be dispensed with to repeat the legend of the deceased’s planet: this, however, is not meant

as a learned assertion. These lachrymosial tombs, then, are but a woman's conceptions to serve a poetic purpose ; but on which an observation was necessary to render the passage intelligible.

29. *Nor seek from him for legend's store.*—p. 84.

“The Gauls are such passionate lovers of novelty, that they stop the passengers upon the road, and oblige them to declare all the news they have heard before they let them proceed to their journey.”—Cæsar, lib. iii.

30. *But I will drag through Dis's night.*—p. 92.

“The Gauls do report themselves descended from Dis the father of Hell ; and they say the Druids do so tell them.”—Cæsar, 6.

31. *Let the wing'd herald bear my will.*—p. 93.

“Ils étaient accompagnés d'un héraut d'armes vêtu en blanc, couvert d'un chapeau surmonté d'ailes, et tenant en sa main une branche de verveine entourée de deux serpents.”—Chateaubriand.

Of all the gods they worship chiefly Mercury.—Cæsar, 6.

32. *With streaming red hair, through the grove.*—p. 94.

“They often wash their hair with water boiled with lime, and turn it backwards from the forehead to the crown of the head, and thence to their very necks, that their faces may be more fully seen.”—Diodorus, lib. v.

33. *Hastening, lest Vega should rehearse
On them the lagging crane's dread curse.*—p. 94.

“Ils ne paraît point que les Gauls aient jamais honoré les corbeaux, au lieu qu'on ne peut point douter qu'ils n'aient honoré non seulement les grues en général, mais encore trois grues en particulier. Enfin rien ne marque mieux la vénération que les Gaulois avaient pour les grues, que le soin qu'ils avaient pour les imiter. Les grues, au rapport des naturalistes, comme oiseau de passage, s'assemblaient tous les ans pour aller chercher ensemble un climat plus doux, et mettent en pièces la grue qui arrive la dernière au rendez-vous ; de même quand les Gaulois s'assemblaient pour les intérêts de l'état, il en coûtait la vie toujours à celui qui venoit le dernier.”—Dom Martin, tom. ii. and Thierry, tom. ii.

34. *The sacred banner hung unfurl'd.*—p. 95.

“Les Druides d'Autun attribuaient une grande vertu à l'œuf du serpent. Ils avaient pour armoiries dans leur bannières d'azur, à la couchée des serpents d'argent, surmonté d'un gui de chêne, garni de ses sinoples.”—St. Foix.

35. *Agabus stands in robes of white.*—p. 95.

White was the colour only used by the Druids.

36. *Begirted by a golden band,
While golden bracelets deck'd each hand.*—p. 95.

“The Arch-Druid dress consisted of flowing robes of white, fastened with a golden band, with golden bracelets on his arm.”—Histoire de la Bretagne.

37. *The mystic egg was seen to rest.*—p. 95.

As opinions widely differ on the mysterious egg, I will mention two authorities on the subject.

“Various are the opinions on this mystical symbol. Pliny saw one of these eggs; but he had not the curiosity to examine any further than its cartilaginous integument, otherwise he would probably have discovered that it contained either a lunette of glass, or small ring of the same material, such as those which the Welsh call *Gleiniau Nadredd*. These were certainly insignia of a very sacred character amongst our ancestors: and they seem to have been intimately acquainted with the *Anginum*; for the annotator upon Camden remarks, that in most parts of Wales, all over Scotland, and in Cornwall, the vulgar still retain the same superstitious notions respecting the origin and virtues of the former, which Pliny records of the latter. And the glain was viewed as an emblem of renovation.

“That these glains were artificial can hardly admit of a doubt, though some have rashly confounded them with certain productions of nature. We find some of them blue, some white, a third sort green, and a fourth regularly variegated with all these sorts of colours, but still preserving the appearance of glass; whilst others again were composed of earth, and only glazed over.”—Davies’ “*Mythology and Rites of the British Druids*.”

“Ce prétendu œuf, qui paraît bien n’avoir été autre chose qu’une echinite ou pétrification d’oursin de mer, présentait la figure d’une pomme de moyenne grosseur, dont la substance dure et blanchâtre était recouverte de fibres, et d’excroissances, pareilles au tenailles du polype. La religion n’était pas étrangère au choix que les Druides avaient fait de ce fossile, et à l’origine, qu’ils lui supposaient car ces idées

d'œuf et de serpent, rappellent l'œuf cosmogénique des mythologues orientaux, ainsi que la metempsychose et l'éternelle rénovation dont le serpent était l'emblème. Au reste ils répandaient sur la formation et sur la conquête de ce précieux talisman des fables absurdes, auxquelles pourtant le plus célèbre des naturalistes Romains (Pline) semble ne pas refuser croyance."—Histoire des Gaulois, Thierry.

38. *The golden keys his office told.*—p. 96.

"Les chefs des Druides avaient des clés pour symbole."—St. Foix.

39. *While the gold sacred sickle graced
The royal band that girt his waist.*—p. 96.

The golden sickle was one of the badges of the Arch-Druid.

40. *The vervain Vega's forehead bound.*—p. 96.

The vervain—*verbena officinalis*—was one of the most sacred plants of the Druids.

41. *And the bright crescent on her brow.*—p. 96.

"The lunette was a Druidic charm: it was the type of the moon, which planet was the sign of Ceridwin."—Davies' Mythology.

42. *In amber charm appear'd to glow.*—p. 96.

Amber was highly esteemed by the Druids, and greatly made use of by them for amulets and charms.

43. *On horse whose hoof upon the strand.*—p. 102.

Cæsar's horse had a particular celebrity; foaled at Rome,

in the stables of the proconsul, it was perceived that he carried on his hoof an impression like a hand. The augurs, consulted on the subject, foretold that Caesar would be master of the world.

44. *The battle-worn eleven,
Who on their hazel crutches came.*—p. 103.

Monsieur de Villemarquè has communicated a singular monument of Darius. "The children in Lower Brittany," he says, "repeat still a song, in which is mentioned the departure of the Roman fleet for Nantz, and of its arrival at Vannes, and of the terrible massacre of the Armorican Druids: the subject is a lesson given to a child by one of the Druids who has escaped death, or else of some of their fugitive descendants of whom Tacitus speaks. After having instructed his pupil into how many parts human knowledge is divided, theology, chronology, astronomy, magic, medicine, the chief ramifications of a whole that springs from unity, to stop at the number twelve, the master arrives at history comprised under the numbers ten and eleven.

"*Druid.* Beautiful and ingenuous disciple of the Druid, answer me, all beautiful! what shall I sing unto thee?

"*Child.* Sing to me about the number ten, that I may learn it to-day.

"*Druid.* Ten ships filled with enemies have been seen coming from Nantz. Woe to you! woe to you! men of Vannes. Beautiful and ingenuous child of the Druid, all beautiful! what wantest thou of me? what shall I sing to thee?

"*Child.* Sing to me about the number eleven, that I may learn it to-day.

"*Druid.* Eleven armed Druids come from Vannes, their

swords broken, their garments stained with blood, leaning on crutches of hazel wood : of three hundred, there remain but eleven.

“ In the Celtic traditions the hazel was a symbol of defeat.”
—*Histoire de la Bretagne*.

45. *Oh ! would that on the sacred isle.*—p. 103.

The island of Sena, or Sen, at the mouth of the Loire, was particularly sacred, and inhabited by only nine Druidesses, greatly renowned for their learning and mysteries.

46. *Ceridwin.*—p. 104.

“ The wife of Hu Gadarn. The Bards describe her as having presided over the most hidden mysteries of their ancient superstition, and as a person from whom alone the secrets of their fanatical priesthood were to be obtained in purity and perfection. They also intimate that it was requisite for those who aspired to the chair of presidency, to have tasted the waters of inspiration from her sacred cauldron, or in other words, to have been initiated in her mysteries.”—Davies’ *Mythology of the Druids*.

47. *My voice no more can quench the fire
Of human passion’s maddening ire.*—p. 104.

“ Many times these philosophers (the Druids), stepping in between two armies, when they are just ready to engage near at hand with their swords drawn and spears presented one against another, have pacified them, as if some wild beasts had been chained by enchantment.”—Diodorus, lib. v.

48. *Give me thy counsel, not thy tear.*—p. 104.

“ Cette réputation des Druidesses n’était point renfermé dans l’enceinte des Gauls ; elle volait partout, et faisait que les Druidesses jouaient un fort grand rôle ; on les consultait de toutes parts avec empressement, et leurs décisions étaient prise pour des oracles.”—Dom Martin, tom. i. ch. 27.

49. *Hu Gadarn.*—p. 106.

The following particulars are recorded of him :—

“ 1st. He lived at the time of the flood ; and

“ 2nd. With his oxen he performed some achievement which prevented the repetition of the calamity, the overflowing of the lake or deluge. Triad 97.

“ 3rd. He first collected together, or carried the primitive race ; and

“ 4th. Formed them into communities of families. Triad 57.

“ 5th. He first gave traditional laws for the regulation and government of society. Triad 97.

“ 6th. He was eminently distinguished for his regard to justice, equity, and peace. Triad 5.

“ 7th. He conducted several families of the first race to their respective settlements in the various regions. Triad 4.

“ 8th. But he had instructed this race in the art of husbandry, previous to their removal and separation. Triad 56.”
—Davies’ Mythology, page 106.

50. *That our spirits may be three.*—p. 106.

Three was the sacred number of the Druids.

51. *But no ! it shall not fall ! a grave
Shall round its worshipp'd altars rise
And save it from the sacrifice.*—p. 106.

“The first Christian desecrators of the Celtic temples made such ignorant and wanton havoc of pagan sanctuaries in every country.”—*Archæologia*, vol. xxv. page 104.

52. *Our gods call now, ‘Au gui l’an neuf!’*—p. 106.

“Le gui du chêne, plante parasite, qui s’attache au chêne, et qui était regardée comme sacrée chez les Druides. Au mois de Decembre, qu’on appelait le mois sacré, ils allaient le cueillir en grande cérémonie. Les Dévins marchaient les premiers, en chantant, et le héraut venait suivi de trois Druides portant les choses pour le sacrifice. Enfin paraissait le chef des Druides accompagné de tout le peuple. Il montait sur le chêne, coupait le gui, avec une feuille d’or le plongeait dans l’eau lustrale, en criant

“*‘Au gui l’an neuf.’*”

Dictionnaire Infernal de Magie, aussi Jules Janin et A. Thierry.

“La nuit était descendue, la jeune fille s’arrêta non loin de la pierre du Dolmen, frappa trois fois ses mains en prononçant ce mot mystérieux—

‘Au gui l’an neuf.’

A l’instant je vis briller dans la profondeur du bois mille lumières, chaque chêne enfanta pour ainsi dire un Gaulois, les barbares sortirent en foule de leurs retraites, les uns étaient complètement armés, les autres portaient une branche de chêne à la main droit, et un flambeau à la gauche.”—Chateaubriand.

53.

'Tis done.—p. 107.

The fact of the temple of Tubel having been found entombed is not a singular one, and it owes the preservation of its very peculiar arrangement, in all probability, to that circumstance, as the smaller stones could so easily have been removed for building purposes, or thrown down by ignorant fanaticism.

The temple of St. Helier, said by the learned to be a Druidical temple of the sun, discovered in the island in the year 1785, and removed to Park Place, Oxfordshire, was found similarly buried; and antiquaries have affirmed that numerous monuments of a like description lie entombed in the same manner under our soil. That the island must have at one time held a high position amongst the Druids is proved by the fact stated in the history of Jersey, by Mr. Poingdestier, that his own knowledge was acquainted with the existence of fifty temples or altars now almost all totally destroyed by the increase of population, and the consequent conversion of land into agricultural purposes, and the island is but twelve miles long, varying from five to seven in breadth.

54.

The war spear's bell.—p. 108.

“Les armes de guerre. Des sabres de cuivre et des lances à fer tranchant, et recourbé, orné d’une clochette d’airain afin d’annoncer de loin à l’ennemi l’arrivée du guerrier Gaulois, parceque celui-ci a dédaigné les ambuscades.”—Eugène Sue.

55.

The war dog's cry.—p. 108.

“Canis Belgicus.”—Strabo.

56. *The sacred friends lie side by side.*—p. 108.

It was a custom amongst the Gauls for two friends to swear fealty to each other ; they were then called “Saldunes,” and always kept their vows of fidelity with pious devotion.

“Je ne vous oublierai pas couple généreux, jeunes Franes, que j’ai rencontré au champ de carnage. Les fidèles amis, plus tendres que prudent, s’étaient attachés ensemble par une chaîne de fer. L’un était tombé mort sous la flèche d’un Crétois ; l’autre atteint d’une blessure cruel, mais encore vivant, se tenoit à demi soulevé auprès de son frère d’armes. Il lui disait, ‘Guerrier, tu dors après tes fatigues de bataille, tu n’ouvriras plus les yeux à ma voix, mais la chaîne de notre amitié n’est point rompue, elle me retient à tes côtés.’ En achevant ces mots le jeune Fraue s’incline et meurt sur le corps de son ami.”—Chateaubriand, et Histoire de France, Anquetil.

57. *Oh may my blood upon this grave,
Old Agabus, thy loved blood save.*—p. 114.

One of the tenets of the Gauls was, that the gods would accept the sacrifice of one life to save another.

58. *Carnac.*—p. 115.

“The noblest of Celtic monuments, the temple of Carnac, in Brittany. This great Celtic monument, generally known as ‘the Stones of Carnac,’ is eight miles in length.”—Archæologia, vol. xxv.

“Une tradition constatée parmi les Bretons est que la contrée de Carnac, ou Carnat, près d’Auray dans l’ancienne basse Bretagne, était principalement consacrée au culte que

les prêtres gaulois rendaient à la divinité, on peut conjecturer avec assez de vraisemblance que le lieu choisi par les Druides de l'Armorice, et par ceux de l'île de la Bretagne, pour leurs réunions communes et pour leurs assemblées générales était Carnac. L'on y decouvre une foule de monuments qui semblent l'attester. Parmi ces monuments qui annoncent le goût du gigantesque et les plus grandes difficultés vaineus, on distingue plusieurs rangs d'énormes pierres, qui s'étendent à une grand distance, en fil symetrique, et écartés les unes des autres d'environ trois toises. Leur élévation commune est de douze à vingt pieds, et quelquefois d'avantage."

59. *Our country on Dariorig's plain.*—p. 119.

"Le massacre de tous les sénateurs de Dariorig, la vente, sous la lame, de la plus grande partie des rebelles, apprirent au Gauls comment César savait punir la révolte.

"La puissance des Vénètes fut aneantie pour toujours.

"Ce fut le dernier effort tenté par les cités Armoricaines pour recouvrir leurs indépendancee."—Histoire des Peuples Bretons, Aurelien de Coursin.

I know not how to end this little poem more appropriately than by closing it with the following beautiful lines, published some years ago in a periodical work.

“THE DYING DRUID.

“WILD terror frowning on his crest,
And fury burning in his breast,
What time the haughty Roman bore
The eagle dire to Mona’s shore :
Of steelly arms the sanguine gleam
Terrific shone on Menai’s stream ;
In deep form’d phalanx on the strand
The Britons brave the invading band,
And raise of battle loud the yell,
And long the hostile hosts repel.
“Oh ! bootless valour ! nought avails,
The giant power of Rome prevails.
With hands upraised to heaven, in vain
Their guardian gods the Druid train,
With faint and faltering voice, implored
To save them from the ruthless sword.

Gash'd with wounds and red with gore,
They lie extended on the shore ;
Or forced upon the holy fire,
Writhing in agonies, expire.
Fast sinking to eternal rest,
The life-blood streaming from his breast,
Stretched beneath the sacred oak,
Dying, this the Arch-Druid spoke :—
' Oh ! most accurst, Oh ! fatal day !
That bends us to tyrannic sway ;
For ever fallen the British name,
Extinct for ever freedom's flame ;
No more beneath the hallow'd shade
Shall to the gods our thanks be paid ;
No more from us our youth shall learn
The unmanly fear of death to spurn ;
Or when their country calls shall fly
Prompt in her glorious cause to die.
They now must watch a tyrant's nod,
And learn with dread to view the rod ;
Must kneel, their cheeks suffused with shame,
Before the murderers of their fame.
Oh ! native land ! than life more dear,
Thy hapless fate extorts a tear :
But soon these eyes closed in death's sleep,
Shall cease their countless woes to weep.
Would but the gods, with one bright ray
Of hope gild life's departing day,
Were but the hour of vengeance nigh,
My soul would unrepining fly !
They hear ! they hear ! they grant my prayer
Light floating on the ambient air !

Before my sight, in visions clear,
Scenes of futurity appear.
Behold ! behold ! with glorious mien
And thundering arms, the warrior queen,
Fierce rushing on her destined prey,
Sweeps to death their hosts away :
Groans of the gasping mangled throng
Roll the banks of Thames along—
Soon on our sea-encircled shore
Shall Rome's proud banner wave no more.
Alas ! not so, this heaven denies,
She dies, the glorious heroine dies.

“ ‘ Lo from the bosom of the north
Burst the countless myriads forth ;
Band after band, in dire array,
Bend o'er Italia's vales their sway :
On thee, oh ! Rome, the deluge pours,
And sinks in dust thy haughty towers.
But Oh ! my country, to my eyes
What grand, what glorious scenes arise !
Though oft the sun's returning ray
Shall see thee made an easy prey
Of every ruffian wandering band,
The mock of every happier land ;
Yet on the expanded roll of Time
I see the glorious beam sublime :
O'er the wide wave of every shore,
By thy intrepid legions bore,
In lands now hid from human eye,
I see thy conquering banners fly.
Rivals in vain, with envious gaze,
Shall scowling view thy splendid blaze

Awe struck, low at thy feet shall kneel,
And dread thy just revenge to feel.

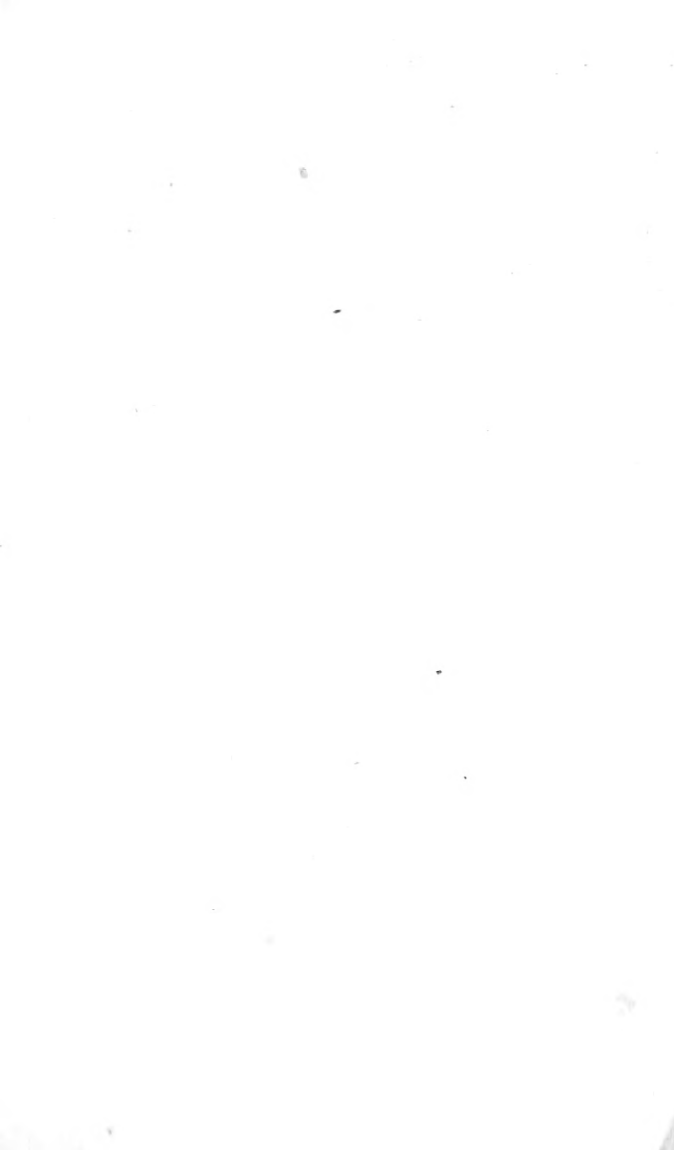
“‘ Oh ! ’tis enough : ye gods, I come
Rejoicing to my eternal home.’

Thus, with prophetic ardour fired,
Spake the Arch Druid, and expired.

“R. A. DAVENPORT,”

THE END.

21



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